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Jules Gabriel Janin

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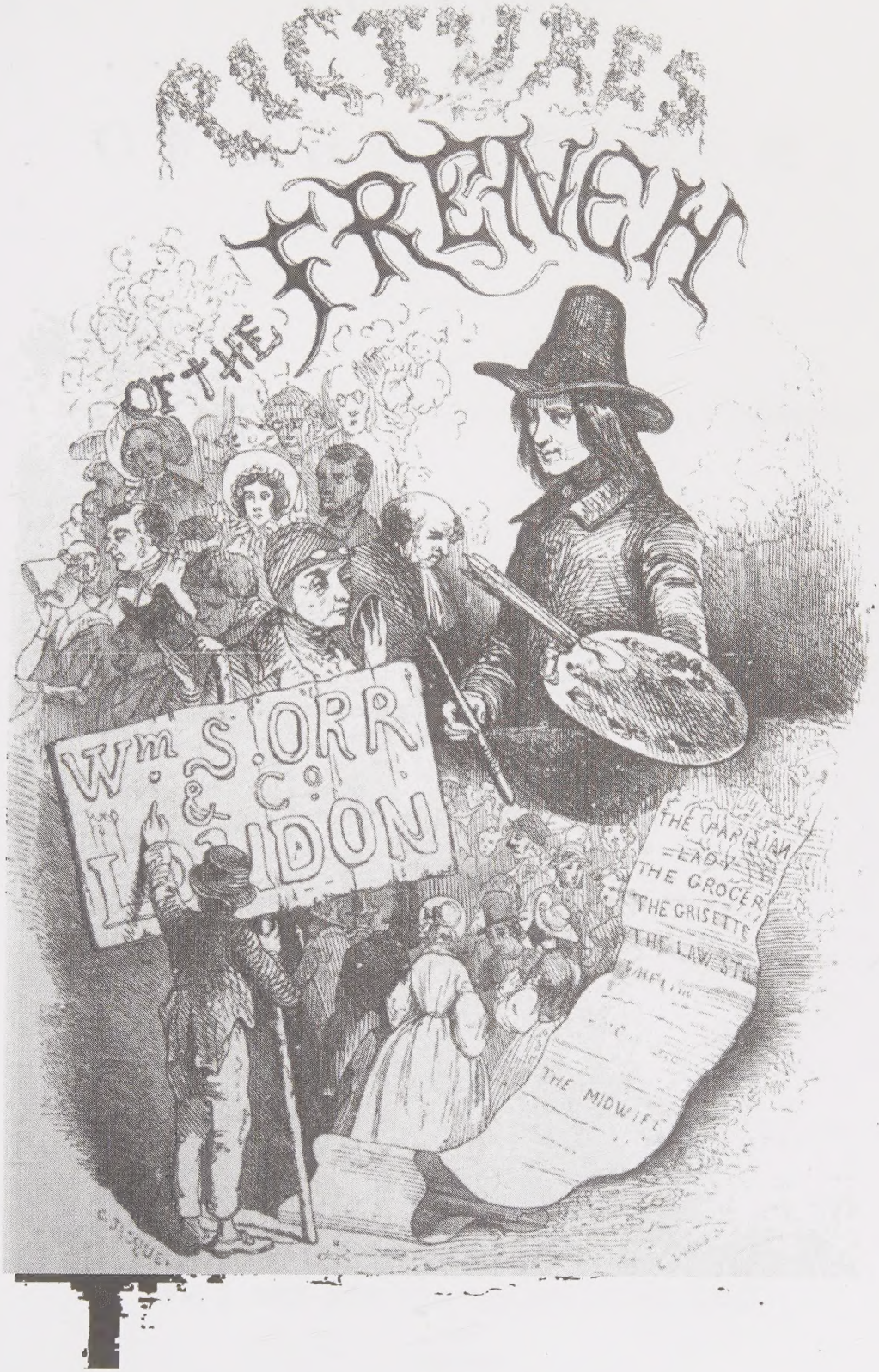
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PICTURES
OF THE FRENCH
Wm. S. ORR & C.
LONDON
THE PARISIAN LADY
THE GROCER
THE GRISETTE
THE LAWYER
THE MIDWIFE

PICTURES

OF THE FRENCH:

A SERIES OF

LITERARY AND GRAPHIC DELINEATIONS OF FRENCH CHARACTER.

BY JULES JANIN, BALZAC, CORMENIN,

AND OTHER CELEBRATED FRENCH AUTHORS.

WITH UPWARDS OF TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY ENGRAVINGS,

DRAWN ON THE WOOD BY GAVARNI, H. MONNIER, AND MEISSONIER,

AND ENGRAVED BY LAVIEILLE, ETC.

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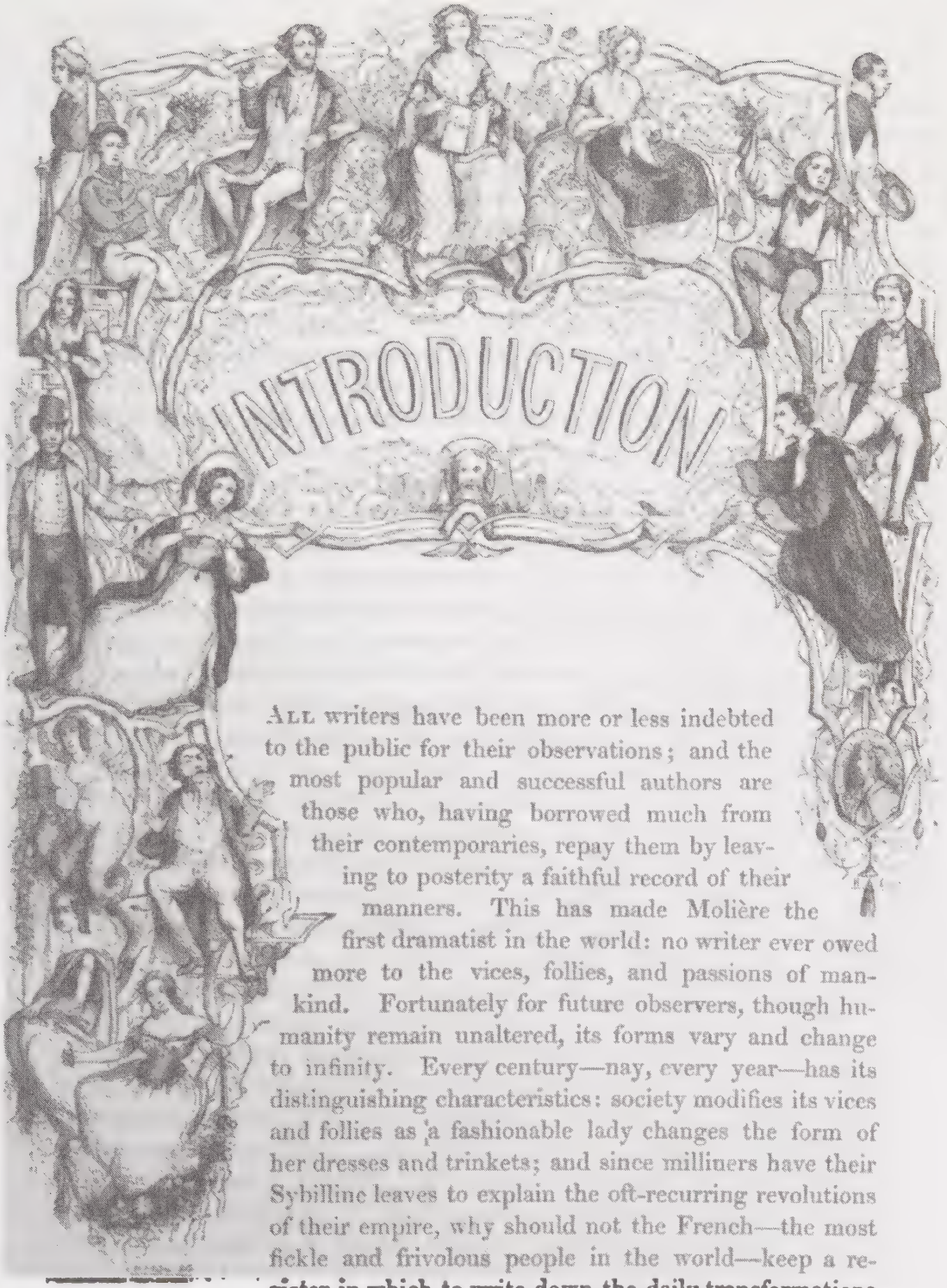
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All writers have been more or less indebted to the public for their observations; and the most popular and successful authors are those who, having borrowed much from their contemporaries, repay them by leaving to posterity a faithful record of their manners. This has made Molière the first dramatist in the world: no writer ever owed more to the vices, follies, and passions of mankind. Fortunately for future observers, though humanity remain unaltered, its forms vary and change to infinity. Every century—nay, every year—has its distinguishing characteristics: society modifies its vices and follies as a fashionable lady changes the form of her dresses and trinkets; and since milliners have their Sybilline leaves to explain the oft-recurring revolutions of their empire, why should not the French—the most fickle and frivolous people in the world—keep a register in which to write down the daily transformations of their manners, with all their shades and peculiarities?

La Bruyère, the most sagacious moralist of modern times, has remarked, that "not a year passes that would not furnish materials for a volume of

characters." If such a yearly record had been handed down to us, without interruption, since the time of Theophrastus, it would be impossible to imagine a more varied, instructive, and amusing work. But no. Neglecting to describe mankind, historians have wasted their talents on dry and minute accounts of battles and sieges, bloody wars, and treaties of peace. They have told us how our forefathers fought, but not how they lived; we are informed of the fashion of their swords and shields, but not of their every-day costume; we can study their laws, but we are left in ignorance of their manners and customs. Hence the many centuries that have elapsed since the origin of the social existence of mankind, have been almost lost to the observation and history of every-day life.

How limited the number of moralists who have stooped to record the simple annals of every-day existence! Among the countless hosts of authors, how few the comic poets compared with the logicians, metaphysicians, and even casuists! Homer, Theophrastus, Plautus, and Terence, are, among the ancients, the only authors whose works furnish lively descriptions of the manners of their respective ages. Public life, in modern times, has at once comic and serious representatives in Molière and La Bruyère: the one the historian and the faithful friend of the people; the other the historian—certainly not the friend—of the Court. After these two great masters, subordinate writers occasionally appeared—St. Foix and Mercier, for instance. But many tavern moralists, and low caricaturists, are not worth mentioning! What a pleasure those valets-de-chambre of history took in reducing their heroes to the most contemptible proportions! To these limners of mawkish sketches on kitchen walls, even satirists are preferable—an ill-bred and ferocious crew, it must be confessed, who yet contrive to produce likenesses, however exaggerated and distorted, and whose writings bear the same analogy to history as a dagger to a lancet.

But it is not our province to inquire into the merits of all the tribe of moralists. We intend to examine how we may contrive to leave for our posterity a record of our manners and every-day life, bearing in mind the inevitable truth, that a time will come when we ourselves shall be spoken of as ancestors and forefathers. Our estimation of our own merits, however humble, will certainly be above the mark; and nothing will prevent our falling headlong into the yawning gulf of history. Therefore, as we are on the verge of the precipice, let us, while it is yet time, take measures to fall with becoming dignity; otherwise our foot may slip, or we may turn giddy, and so topple like drunkards or lazy slumberers to the bottom of the abyss.

We should remember that our descendants will feel a natural curiosity to know what sort of men we were, and how we employed our time; the

cut of our coats, and the fashion of our wives' dresses; whether our houses were built of stone or of brick; what was our interpretation of the word Beauty, subject to so many different meanings; how we rode our horses; how our dinners were dressed, and what was our taste in wines; what kind of poetry was most esteemed by us; whether we powdered our hair, and wore top-boots,—to say nothing of hundreds of other questions that would to-day put us all to the blush, yet which may and will naturally arise in the minds of our great-grandchildren. The bare anticipation is enough to make one's hair stand on end.

We must, however, resign ourselves to our fate, my dear contem oraries. Our sayings and doings of to-day will at some future time make part of history. A hundred years hence, people will with astonishment speak of our asphaltum pavements, our diminutive steamers, our imperfectly-constructed railroads. Who knows!—our descendants will perhaps wonder at our small theatres, at the classic style of our modern dramas, and the chastity of our vaudevilles. In future times, our Paris will be mentioned as the metropolis of an ancient kingdom, which absorbed the whole realm, which formed the gathering-point of all the beauty, wit, genius, and wealth of the nation; but where also virtue and vice, all the miseries of life, and happy illusions, were mingled together. It will be recorded that in this metropolis we spent our time in speaking, writing, reading, and listening; that speeches were every morning printed in the papers; that speeches were in the middle of the day delivered from the rostrum, and appeared in print in the evening; that the almost exclusive preoccupation of the Parisians was whether they would make better speeches on the morrow than the day before; that they had no other ambition, and that for them the rest of the world might be reduced to chaos, provided every morning brought them their cup of coffee, and their share of ready-made wit. It will be added of the great French capital, so proud of its unity, that it consisted of five or six faubourgs—each a little city within itself—as well separated from each other as if the great wall of China marked their boundaries.

La Bruyère and Molière had nothing to describe beyond the court and the town. In their days there was no other distinction; and whoever did not belong to the one necessarily belonged to the other. It was then the fashion, in the public walks, to stop and stare one another in the face; and women were wont to flock there to display their dress, and contest the admiration of the loungers. There were in Paris magistrates of the long and short robe; young judges affecting the dandy; Crispins who were fain to borrow horses of their friends, in order to sport a carriage and six; and citizens who loved to boast of their pack of hounds. There was André the merchant, who gave splendid entertainments to Elamire, without obtaining the honour of a public notice; Narcissus who rose in the morning

only in order to —— go to bed at night; and the wealthy, handsome, witty Théramène, dreaded by husbands and abominated by suitors. In those days, Paris aped Versailles. The city dames, in imitation of the ladies at court, used to ruin themselves in furniture and lace; and on the wedding-day they would recline in state on their bed, exposed to the public gaze. It was then the custom for acquaintances to run after one another, as if they were anxious to meet. It was also the fashion to be ignorant of the commonest things in the world—not to be able to tell wheat from rye. Citizens had begun, at that early day, to drive their carriage, and light their mansions with wax; gold and silver, which erst used to be safely deposited in iron chests, now glittered on sideboards and dining-tables; no longer could the real lady be distinguished, so far as appearance went, from the tradesman's wife; all Paris seemed to have conspired to forget the old piece of civic wisdom, which teaches that the magnificent and costly display of the great and wealthy becomes extravagant folly and deception when attempted by private individuals.

Such was the metropolis of France a hundred and sixty years since. Modern Paris may certainly be recognized beneath some of these general features, yet how great the difference! In the above feeble outline, the Elector, the Juryman, and the National Guard, are unnoticed, or considered as impossible chimeras; the Artist and the Author are invisible; the Speculator and Capitalist are forgotten. Neither the Parisian Grisette, nor the *Gamin*, nor the Actress, nor the Courtezan, can be seen. The moralist passes over the Government Clerk, the Half-pay Officer, the Savant given up to his studies; and the "Man of the People," whose existence had hardly commenced, yet who was already in secret meditating the attack on the abhorred Bastille. On reperusing La Bruyère's *Caractères*, one can at first fancy that the pictures are not entirely unknown, and that one has somewhere or other seen the originals or their prototypes; but on a closer inspection it becomes apparent, that though the stage is still the same, the actors are quite different. Hence the necessity of from time to time retracing these mutable and evanescent pictures.

We shall have a mighty revolution in our national manners to record. A hemisphere has disappeared like volcanic isles which, observed by navigators, sink beneath the waves ere the next vessel sails that way. Side by side with the then despised Paris, there was, in those days, the omnipotent and all-sufficient court. And what has become of the mighty court? Where has the haughty world of gold and silk taken refuge? Where, in this nineteenth century, shall we look for that adept in the science of dissimulation and physiognomy, the bland courtier? What has become of those men of embroidered tunics, who were wont to haunt the antechambers and stairs of marble palaces, the abodes of royalty, and of the

most polite gentlemen in the world? Where shall we seek the race of servile adulators whose eye cowered at sight of their sovereign—men of violent and overbearing temper; fulsomely obsequious in the antechamber; despicable in the drawing-room; flattering, attentive, insinuating, devoted slaves of women, whose ears they would not scruple to offend with grossly indelicate discourse? These men of note in their day, these leaders of fashion, these refiners of the arts of luxury and dissipation, these retainers of the Rohans, the Foix, the Châtillons, the Montmorencies—all have disappeared.

Singular state of society! when it was impossible to live without begging, and when beggars were also impertinent and saucy; when the most clever among the courtiers contrived to live at once on the Church, the Army, and the Bench; when all passed their lives begging and receiving, congratulating and calumniating one another; when everybody went masked without hiding their features; when forgetfulness, pride, hard-heartedness, and ingratitude, were current coin of the court; when honour, virtue, and probity were of no avail.

Such, however, was Versailles. But how changed now! Royalty has become so humble, that a few citizens are scarcely seen raising their hat on the passage of the king who rebuilt the Palace. All the philosophers since Solomon's days have not taught us such a lesson as this on the vanity of human greatness. A more forcible argument could not possibly be urged in proof of the necessity of at frequent intervals recompiling the history of poor human nature.

The society described by La Bruyère has passed away; not a vestige survived the first Revolution. Yet have we still much to remind us of the social system once in operation in France. We have, for instance, preserved the "vocabulary of set phrases," which we still use to congratulate one another. Now, as formerly, "with five or six technical terms of art, and nothing more," a man sets up for a connoisseur in music, painting, architecture, and gastronomy. Now, as when La Bruyère wrote, there is no lack of people whose wealth and politeness stand them instead of wit and merit, who are as shallow-brained as sheep, and whom fortune's favours visit by mere accident. But fortunes are differently made now-a-days, and are no longer to be acquired as of yore: the sovereign has changed, and the people have their flatterers in their turn. Do not fancy that a modern ambitious man would seek his fortune *at court*, forsooth! When La Bruyère speaks of "favour," he has no occasion to say "royal" favour, which was understood. At the present day, when favour is mentioned, an epithet is indispensable to be understood; nay, to express oneself correctly, "popular favour" is the phrase. We know no other favour than *that*.

Whence it follows, that the more French society has divided, the more

difficult has its analysis become. That great kingdom has been parcelled out into an infinity of small republics, each of which has its laws, its customs, its dialects, its heroes, its political opinions—in the absence of religious belief—its faults, its objects of ambition and of love. The French soil has not been more incessantly subdivided since the confiscation and the sale of the nobles' estates. How, then, should the same essayist penetrate into all those distant regions, of whose roads, language, and customs he is ignorant? How should the same moralist understand all these various languages, and each different dialect? Should he chance to lose his way, and to mistake one province for another, how great would be his astonishment on finding the costume, characters, habits, and manners of the inhabitants, entirely different from what he expected! It is therefore necessary that the arduous task of observing and delineating character should be divided between several writers, that competent historians should be selected for each department, that each writer should have heard and seen what he professes to describe. It was all very well formerly for one writer to undertake the whole of such a work, when France consisted only of the court and the metropolis; but at the present day, when no class is confined within fixed limits, and when all the elements of French society are scattered and thrown into confusion, let all keen and humorous observers concur to produce this play of a thousand and one varied acts.

In order fully to understand the necessity of dividing the labour as much as the subjects are divided, open at random a chapter or two of La Bruyère, and you will see what an infinite variety of materials at present exist, unknown when the *Caractères* were written. The first chapter treats of Works of Genius. Since La Bruyère's days, this simple chapter has become subject matter for an immense book, that should include all the details of literary life—a state of existence, and a new means of rising to importance, undreamt of in the seventeenth century. At that time, "book-making, like clock-making, was simply a trade." In our days, alas! the "trade" has degenerated, and may with greater propriety be likened to cobbling. In La Bruyère's time, no *chef d'œuvre*, "the joint produce of several hands," had ever been seen; now it is an every-day occurrence. La Bruyère would not allow the critic to go beyond pointing out to the public "the quality of the paper and the binding, and the price of the book reviewed." If La Bruyère were now alive, he would certainly be the first among those critics whose office he held in such sovereign contempt.

In the seventeenth century, literary life was hardly beginning; nor are we, even at the present day, quite certain that it has commenced in earnest. Heaven alone knows how it will be after another hundred years!

Then there is a chapter on Personal Merit, in which mention is made of "*the difficulty of acquiring a great name*," so easily obtained now-a-days—

of the vast intellectual resources necessary for men to live "*without places and situations at Court,*" while, at the present day, place and public employment are only accepted by men of moderate capacity, destitute of ambition. In the same chapter it is stated, that "the children of the great are not *amenable to the ordinary rules of nature;*" that "they have little or nothing to expect from time and the progress of events;" and that "for them death precedes old age." This was written in the Duke of Burgundy's infancy. The children of the kings now-a-days sit on the same form at college with plain citizens' sons, and acquire knowledge only by dint of patient study. When they are rewarded with the second historical prize of their class, they must have deserved it better than their schoolfellows. Briefly, there is no comparison between the "personal merit" of to-day and the "personal merit" of the seventeenth century.

Neither does the profound chapter on Women bear any analogy with our notions of the fair sex in the present day. Survey them as you will from top to toe, incredible difference will be observed between our ladies and La Bruyère's. General resemblance only survives: there are the same love of expense, of dress, of jewellery; the same affectation, the same coquetry, the same caprice ever attendant on beauty as its counterpoise; woman is still the same coquettish, intriguing, perfidious, capricious being,—yet what innumerable features have disappeared! Whither have you fled, Célie, who were in love by turns with Roscius, Bathylle, the tumbler Cobus, and the flute-player Dracon? What has become of the domestic tyrant, known formerly in noble families as the spiritual director, the father-confessor? Where shall we now turn to behold the devout woman "who tried to deceive God, but deceived herself?"—for the learned woman, "upon whom one looks as upon a fine piece of armour?" They have all disappeared; but we have in our time a host of female characters who were unknown in the seventeenth century—from the genius in faded bonnet and ragged stockings to the recently-discovered Philosophical Lady of thirty years of age.

In matters relative to love, we have, now-a-days, dishevelled passions, Cupids at daggers-drawing, criminal attachments better regulated than marriages, Adonises with splendid beards *à la Henri IV.*, and moonlight ravings; the tender passion has degenerated into a thing of outward show; the feelings are, in these times, exhibited as a jeweller displays his wares in his window: thus have love and gallantry, two articles which moralists were wont to turn to such excellent account, been cruelly destroyed.

And where now can we find the drawing-room? What, we ask, has become of Parisian conversation, that elegant proficiency in which the French people erst so justly prided themselves? We can transport ourselves in imagination into one of the sumptuous drawing-rooms of by-gone days, in

the Hotel de Rambouillet, at Mlle. de L'Enclos', or at Mme. de Sévigné's. The air is redolent of poetry and genius! Beaux-esprits of all denominations are admitted; slanderers, satirists, and (*rara aves!*) good-natured wits; orators, moralists, learned men, and even "purists." Elegant and polished wit is the unique centre of these delightful *réunions*, where Bossuet read his first sermon,—where Molière first read Tartufe. But now-a-days, what a change! Take care, ladies, get out of the way; and mind your laced scarfs! Here comes a bevy of our fashionable young men, occupying the whole breadth of the Boulevard, their spurred heels clattering on the asphaltum, cigars in their mouths, and their hats nailed on their heads! Thank your stars, ladies, if you escape unhurt through the clouds of tobacco-smoke, and the practical jokes of those elegant young men!

Even the man of fortune of former days has undergone a complete metamorphosis. He was reckoned a rich man in the seventeenth century who could afford to eat *entremets*, to hang oil-paintings round his apartments, to keep a town and a country-house, to drive his own carriage, and to marry one of his daughters to a duke. Your capitalist of 1840 speculates on 'Change, has apartments on a second floor, goes to the play with an order, and marries his son to a rich bill-broker's daughter.

The man of business, the money-agent of the good old times, was a bear that no art could tame. The modern stock-broker is an elegantly-dressed young man, who dines at the Café de Paris, and frequents the Opera.

"Fifty thousand livres a year" was erst thought a princely fortune, and the possessor of such an income was never named without reverence; but now, forsooth, fifty thousand francs per annum has become so common that they are spoken of with complete indifference. Of yore, there were *partisans* who, beginning life as servants, ended by becoming princes. Now there are bankers who commenced their career as princes, and close it in the capacity of servants.

But now, as ever, "'to make a fortune' is so fine a phrase that it is in universal use; it is to be found in all languages; it tickles the ears even of foreigners and barbarians; there is no sacred place into which it has not penetrated, no solitude in which it is unknown."

It would therefore be the duty of the writer of the present day to describe the new roads to fortune: the Bank, the Exchange, advertisements, prospectuses, joint-stock companies, rises and falls, disasters and bankruptcies, the endless speculations on nothing and on the vacuum, and other legitimate fields of commerce which our fruitful century has reserved for itself—unwilling to lay itself open to the curse of ages to come.

It has been said of the obsolete chapter on the Court that the race of the Great is extinct. True it is that Prince Talleyrand, the last gentleman of our *eminently* constitutional France, is no more. Therefore let us no

longer look for the exclusive race of happy people who of necessity were the only rich and honourable men in the world—who alone were in possession of splendid furniture, a good table, and fine horses. But we have lost also the dwarfs, clowns, and jesters who amused them, and the flatterers who cajoled them. The race has become extinct, and in its place has arisen, armed with all its rights and powers, the *Grande Nation* of grocers.

The Monied Man has succeeded the Great Lord. It is, now-a-days, the monied man who prides himself on opening a drive in a forest, on surrounding his park by a wall, on gilding his ceilings and cornices, on ornamenting his gardens with fountains and statues, and on building an orangery; but our modern monied men, do they, any more than the great lords of a past century, strive who shall do most good?—who shall be of most service to the necessitous poor?

Our century has not what is vulgarly called great lords, but we have our great men. These latter are so happy, that in all their life they never have to put up with the least contradiction—at least so long as they bend to popular passion, whose humble slaves they are after all. They may be compared to a flag in skilful hands; like the great men of the last age, "they believe themselves alone to be perfect," and always stand on one foot, as changeable as a weathercock. Their greatness, unfortunately, is not durable: called into existence by a trifle, the most insignificant trifle will destroy it,—a black ball at an election, or an article in a newspaper.

These are, certainly, notable differences, which it was absolutely necessary to point out in our Pictures. With respect to the chapter on the Sovereign, in La Bruyère's "Caractères," which has long been the most striking specimen of political science, all attempts would fail to describe the profound abyss that separates it—written as it was near the Palace of Versailles—from the Charter of 1830. The Charter has, as it were by enchantment, created among us an entirely new series of characters, of strange and incredible manners, of which past ages had not and could not have any idea, any more than at the present day we can form an idea of the drawing-rooms of old Paris, in which all the moralists of the Augustan age of French literature, headed by La Bruyère and Molière, sought their heroes—Tartufe, Célimène, M. Orgon, Alceste, M. Jourdain and his wife, Elise, Sganarelle, Valère, Marianne, Ménalque the absent, Argyre the coquette, Gnaton the glutton, Ruffin the bon-vivant, Antagoras the litigious; the country squire, so useless to his country, his family, and himself; Adraste the licentious devotee, Triphile the bel-esprit. These and many more still exist, it is true, but modified and changed; some less ridiculous, some more odious; and we may read of human monstrosities that, fortunately, can no longer be seen among us. Take, for instance, the picture of the peasant of the seventeenth century:—"Certain wild bipeds,

male and female, are seen scattered over the country, dark, freckled, and sunburnt, and strongly attached to the soil they cultivate; their voice is nearly articulate, and, viewed in an erect posture, their face bears some resemblance to that of civilised man: in fact, they are of the genus *homo!*" Now-a-days, God be thanked, this animal no longer exists; he has raised his head, and become a man indeed; nay, the ambitious occasionally go to visit him—not in his burrow, but in his house, "to solicit the favour of his vote and interest." It is not long since an animal of this species was named chevalier of the Legion of Honour for inventing a new kind of plough.

La Bruyère's chapter on Fashion is one that has naturally suffered very little deterioration from age. It is the same with this everlasting subject as it is with the figures reflected by the *Daguerréotype*. Call the different views of a landscape, reproduced by the camera-obscura, the same, if you will; but as the aspect of nature resembles at no one hour that of a preceding hour, so no one picture representing the same landscape will resemble views taken at an earlier or later hour in the day. In La Bruyère's time, butcher's-meat was out of fashion; now-a-days, fashion, which patronizes all, would shrink from patronizing any kind of meat. Formerly, floriculturists cultivated the tulip; in 1840, the camellia alone is cultivated, while ten years ago, dahlias alone were esteemed by horticulturists superior to weeds: twenty years since, nothing went down but roses. The book-collector of the olden time had his house full of books, from cellar to garret; his modern representative scrupulously chooses his books. But, in the main, they are still the same floriculturist, the same book-collector, the same antiquary, "whose ill-fed and worse-clothed daughters are not indulged in bed-furniture and clean linen;" the same bird-fancier, whose feathered songsters enliven every room of his house, but without making it smell like a stable; the same entomologist, "the first man in the world for butterflies;" the same duellist; the same gamester; the same eccentric character, who "gravely ponders overnight how he may the next day make himself most conspicuous." We also have our gallant gay magistrates, our grandiloquent barristers, our hired slanderers, our ragouts, our *entremets*, our cordials; we have one Hermippe, who has carried the science of comfort and luxury in furnishing his mansion to such a length, that he has discovered a means of going up and down stairs without making use of the staircase; we have our quack physicians, who now-a-days profess mesmerism and homœopathy, instead of vending the universal elixir; nor must we omit the astrologers and fortune-tellers of this prolific age—albeit our belief in the black art is not so strong as was La Bruyère's;—nor the wonderful revolutions of grammars and dictionaries, nor the unceasing succession of short-lived new words, which come in with

the flowers, and disappear at the fall of the leaf. The eloquent preachers of the gospel, who used formerly to attract large congregations eager to listen to their impressive oratory, have disappeared; but in return we have political discussions, and the embittered feelings spread from the rostrum among all classes of society. Now, as heretofore, men are the dupes of a public display of oratory.

It must be confessed that the race of sceptical philosophers has become extinct. The man who, at the present day, should set up for an atheist, and openly attempt to prove the non-existence of a Deity, would only be laughed at: time has been, when such a sophist would have excited terror, when ponderous quartos would have been written in refutation of his alarming theories. Though these professed champions of atheism have disappeared from among us, we have disciples of Robespierre, of Marat, and of Danton—honest young sansculottes who would not harm a fly, yet who boldly express their wish that all mankind had but one head, that they might knock it off with a single blow: we ought, therefore, to be indulgent in our strictures on the ancients, and bear in mind how much we shall need of indulgence at the hands of posterity. Let us not be too severe in our remarks upon the manners and customs of our ancestors, for the time will come when we shall be ancestors ourselves. With respect to manners, we are, perhaps, too distant from those who have gone before us, and are certainly too near our contemporaries to pass an impartial judgment upon them: let us therefore adopt all our predecessors' methods of describing the characters of their epoch, resorting to comedy and drama, to essay as well as to novel and romance. Even satire and personal abuse are not without their utility and value: those reprobates only are to be deprecated who, in the analysis of human life, use the poniard instead of the scalpel.

Too much neglected in our days, in its legitimate department of the stage, comedy has found its way in all productions of art—in history, romance, song, and especially in painting. The painter has become moralist, and, seizing the happy moment, compelled his lively contemporaries to sit for their "Pictures." Painters and writers have long separately followed this plan; but hitherto the ingenious idea has never struck them of blending their caustic satire, and combining their studies of character. At last, however, they have united in the great task of depicting the manners of their contemporaries, and it was natural that such an association should produce the present work—a comedy of a hundred varied acts, with appropriate scenery, costume, and decorations.

There are entire episodes of the national history of France, which, as far as private manners are concerned, are commemorated solely by pictures—more or less faithful: are not Boucher and Watteau, for instance, as much the historians of the manners and customs of the French people in the

eighteenth century, as Diderot and Crebillon the younger? How charming, and above all how faithful a book might be produced by the united talents of a writer and a painter. Fancy a romance by Crebillon fils, illustrated by Watteau!

But however great a writer's talents—and we should be the last to undervalue them—however scrupulously exact his descriptions, the time is sure to come when certain parts of the pictures, so easily recognised by contemporaries, will be obliterated. The colour and fashion of garments change; arms fall into disuse, and are replaced by other arms; velvet supersedes wool, lace succeeds to velvet, iron is replaced by gold, squalid poverty makes way for wealthy luxury, Grecian for Gothic art, Athens for Rome, the age of Louis XIV. for the age of Louis XV. In a word, whatever may be the difference between one period and another, how would it be possible for a single writer to catch and delineate all these passing shades? It would be like imposing on one naturalist the task of describing the varied notes of all the feathered songsters of the woods. On reading the admirable chapters of old Theophrastus, who in his hundred and fiftieth year died complaining of the brief duration of human life, we are astonished to find depicted in his vigorous and caustic pages, with all the vigour of life, the whole of the Athenian people; who may be there better studied than in Xenophon and Thucydides. But how great would be the reader's pleasure if he could behold the worthy Athenians clothed, housed, and fed, as in Theophrastus's time! Would the student's pleasure be diminished if he could see, as they passed along the streets, all the honest citizens who unconsciously sat to the Grecian philosopher?—the flatterer, the fault-finder, the rustic, the rogue, the chatterer, the tale-bearer, the miser, the brute, the blockhead, the coward, the coxcomb, the leading men of the republic! How fortunate if these truthful descriptions had been handed down to us accompanied by pictures of the originals from the life! What interest would such illustrations have added to Theophrastus's text! How much more vividly would he have appealed to our imagination!

But, Heaven help us, what the ancients neglected to do for us, we have done for posterity: they will have our "pictures"—not "heads," but full-lengths, and as ridiculous as the originals. Nothing has been forgotten in this magic-lantern in which we pass one another in review, not even to light the lamp—nothing has been neglected that could make the work a perfect picture of contemporary manners: in some sort working out the idea of our master La Bruyère, and handing down to our descendants the knowledge of our persons, habits, costumes, and tastes, as an acknowledgment of the benefits conferred upon us by similar information received at the hands of our fathers.

JULES JANIN.



THE PARISIAN LADY.



THE PARISIAN LADY.

BY H. DE BALZAC.

PASSING along, in certain quarters of Paris, some fine morning between the hours of two and five, you observe a Lady approaching. The first glance is like the preface to some charming book,—it presents to you a world of things graceful and elegant! As the botanist detects among the hills and valleys some choice and unexpected prize, so you, amid Parisian vulgarities, have encountered a rare and exquisite blossom! It is the PARISIAN LADY!—the "FEMME COMME IL FAUT."

Either the "cynosure" is accompanied by two distinguished-looking men,—one, at least, decorated with "an order:" or she is followed, at short distance, by a servant in undress livery. She wears no dazzling colours, no elaborately carved zone or buckle; no embroidered flounce is seen waving over her instep; on her feet are shoes of prunella, the sandals crossing a cotton stocking of exceeding fineness, or a plain silk one of soberest grey; or else she wears a delicate boot of the simplest character. Her gown is of a stuff well chosen, but of no great cost; yet its style and fashion shall attract you, and excite the envy of many a city-bred dame; it is usually a wrapper, fastened with knots or bows, and prettily edged with a cord that is but slightly perceptible. She has a manner, all her own, of folding around her a cloak or shawl, which she arranges about her neck and shoulders with a sort of bridling curvet that would convert a *bourgeoise* into a hunchback, but which, in her, is made to indicate the most exquisite proportions of form—even in the very act of veiling them. But how is this done? Ah! that is her secret; and she keeps it without requiring the protection of a patent.

Poets, artists, lovers! all ye who worship Ideal Beauty, that mystic Rose of Genius happily unrevealed to the mere creatures of common life,—hover round and admire this flower of loveliness—at once so judiciously concealed, and so skilfully displayed! The coquette!—observe her! Her walk is a kind of waving and harmonized motion, that makes her soft and dangerous form to quiver beneath its draperies, as at mid-day the serpent goes gliding through the trembling grass. Is it to a demon or an angel that she owes the graceful undulation, mantling beneath her long scarf of black silk, agitating the lace of its edge, and scattering around a breath of balm that I would fain call the Zephyrine of the "Parisienne?" You perceive about her arms, waist, and throat, a display of "science in folds," that compels the most restive material into classic drapery, and reminds you of the antique Mnemosyne! Ah! how well she understands the eloquence of motion!—Observe her manner of advancing the foot, and thus moulding her dress with so exact a propriety, that she excites an admiration—which dares be nothing warmer, only because restrained by the profoundest respect. An Englishwoman essaying such a step, has the air of a grenadier dashing forward to attack a redoubt. To the Parisian Lady be the honor and the glory of the perfect walk! Yes, the civic power did well to accord her the smooth asphalte of the "trottoir"—it was her due! Your bright Unknown displaces no passer-by; but waits with a proud humility till all have made way! The look of distinction peculiar to a highly-bred woman, is noted more especially in her mode of crossing her shawl or mantle over her bosom. She displays, even in walking, an air of serene self-possession that brings before you the Madonnas of Raphael in their frames. Her attitude—at once dignified and composed—compels the most insolent "dandy" to move out of her path. Her bonnet, of the simplest form, has the freshest ribands imaginable. Flowers, perhaps, or feathers? No! flowers invite too many gazers; and feathers demand a carriage. Beneath this head-dress, you find the fresh and tranquil face of a woman self-assured, yet not to fatuity; who *looks* at nothing, but *sees* everything; whose vanity, half annihilated by repletion, has given to her expression a sort of indifference that piques one's curiosity; she knows that all eyes follow her; she knows that all, even of her own sex, will turn round to watch her steps. Thus she traverses Paris, a vestal shining in the purity—OF HER TACT.

But this beautiful genus loves only the warmest latitudes — the most select longitudes of Paris. You will find it between the 20th and the 116th arcade of the Rue Rivoli, under the line of the Boulevarts, from the glowing equator of the Panoramas, where flourish the productions of the Indies, where burst into blossom the most richly elaborated products of industry, even to the Cape of the Madeleine, or to those least impure lands of citizendom, between the numbers 30 and 150 of the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré. During the winter, she prefers the platform of the Feuillants to the pavement of bitumen that borders it. Ay, and this bird of beauty may also be seen floating along the avenue of the Champs Elysées, limited by the Place Louis Quinze on the east, on the west by the avenue of Marigny, on the south by the Chaussée, and on the north by the gardens of the Faubourg St. Honoré, but never in the hyperborean regions of the Rue St. Denis; never in the Kamschatka of the commercial districts; and in bad weather, you will find her—nowhere. These Parisian flowers bloom only for the morning hours; then only do they perfume the promenades; but five o'clock once passed, they fold up, as doth the lily of the day.

The women you see at a later hour, having a slight resemblance to those just described, and seeking to ape them in all things, are of sadly opposite habits and character, whilst the beautiful Unknown—your Beatrice of the day—is the true Parisian lady, the *femme comme il faut*. Strangers find it difficult to recognize the differences, by which our practised observers distinguish them, for woman is an admirable actress; but the Parisian is not to be deceived;—a fastening ill concealed—lacings showing their net-work through a yawning cleft in the back of the dress—shoes frayed, or ill-fitted—bonnet ribands just escaped from the smoothing-iron—a gown too much inflated—a "manner of being"—too stiffly starched! You will observe an affected lowering of the eyes—a sort of studied conventionalism in the whole attitude.

As to the city-bird, the *Bourgeoise*, it were impossible for *us* to confound her with the exquisite Parisian Lady; she is an admirable foil to this enchantress, and explains clearly the charm that your Beatrice has thrown around you. The Bourgeoise has a busy look—she goes—she comes—she peers well about her—she trots to purpose—does not know exactly whether she will, or will not enter a shop. The Lady "comme il faut" knows perfectly what she desires, or will do. The Bourgeoise is undecided; she tucks up her gown to cross the gutters—nay, absolutely drags a child by the hand, which compels her to look out for the coaches. She parades her maternity to the public eye, and cordially chatters to her offspring. It is evident that she has money in her rush-made reticule, and transparent stockings are upon her feet! In winter, she wears a boa over her fur tippet—in summer, both shawl and scarf. Your city dame is skilled to admiration in the redundancies of dress!

But your Beatrice—you will find her again (if you have the requisite qualification,) at "the Italians"—the opera—a ball—where she is seen under an aspect so different, that you would say—"Here are two creations without analogy." The woman has come forth from her vestments of mystery like a butterfly from its silken cone. She now serves up as a delicacy, to your enraptured eyes, those contours that in the morning the involutions of her drapery scarcely permitted you to divine. At the theatre, she will not be found beyond the second boxes, except at "the Italians;" you may there study at your leisure the refined deliberation of her every movement. Adorable deceiver! She makes use of a thousand little artifices of feminine policy, with an appearance of nature that excludes all idea of premeditation or art. Has she a royally beautiful hand? The most astute observer shall believe it absolutely needful that she twist, remodel, put back, or move forward the very ringlet, or tress, she caresses or torments. It shall seem to you that she does but seek to infuse irony, or give grace to the remark just making to her neighbour—while she is really taking the precise position for producing that magic effect of a half-vanishing profile so delighted in by great painters—the light reposing on the cheek—a clear line designating the nose, the delicate rose-tint of the illuminated and transparent nostril—the brow designed with a vivid keenness—the look of fire directed into the distance, while a beam of light points admirably the white roundness of the chin. If she have a pretty foot, she will throw herself on a divan with the coquetry of a cat in the sun, her feet peeping from beneath her drapery. Yet shall you find in her attitude as delicious a model as was ever given by Lassitude to the statuary!

It is only the Parisian "Lady" who displays perfect ease in her dress. She suffers nothing to constrain her. You never can surprise her, as you might the

Bourgeoise, arranging a disorderly epaulette—compelling obedience from a rebellious girdle—observing if the tucker continues a faithful guardian to its trust—or consulting a glass as to the arrangement of her hair. Her toilette is in perfect keeping with her character: she has had time to study it, and decide on what becomes her; what does *not* become her she has known long, and well.

To be a woman of this exquisite fashion does not require great talent, but it *does* require great taste. Your fair one always disappears before the conclusion of the performance; if by chance she shows herself on the red steps of the staircase, she is then a prey to some violent emotion; she is there for a purpose; she has some stealthy look to give, some promise to receive; perhaps she descends thus slowly to satisfy the vanity of some slave—whom she sometimes obeys in her turn. If your meeting be at a ball or evening party, your ear will eagerly and rapidly gather the sweetness, real or affected, of her skilfully modulated voice: you will be delighted with every word—"signifying nothing," perhaps, but to which she communicates the efficacy of deep thought by a skill inimitable: the mind of this woman is the triumph of an art entirely plastic; you know nothing, you retain nothing, exactly, of all that she says; but you shall be charmed,—spellbound, nevertheless. She shakes her head, shrugs gracefully her ivory shoulders, gilds the most insignificant phrase by an incipient smile or pretty pout, and utters an epigram of Voltaire's with a gesture—an "ah!"—or a "there" "and then!" An air of the head becomes the most active interrogation—there is eloquence in the movement that balances her *Cassolette* as it hangs by a ring to her finger; it is the artificially great, resulting from the superlatively small: she drops her hand with a noble grace, suspending it from the arm of her chair, where it hangs like a dewdrop on the edge of a flower,—and behold!—all is said!—she has pronounced a judgment, from which there is no appeal, and which might animate the most insensible. She listens to you; she affords you opportunity for being *spirituel*—and I appeal to your modesty, are not such occasions rare? In *her* presence you are shocked by no inharmonious thought, while you cannot talk for half an hour with a "Bourgeoise," but she will bring her *spouse* before you in one form or another. Should your Beatrice be married, she has the delicacy so closely to veil her husband, that the scrutiny of a Columbus would not discover him; unassisted you could never do it. But you may observe her, towards the close of the evening, looking fixedly at some distinguished person of middle age: her carriage is ordered—she departs; and you bear to your pillow the golden fragments of a delicious dream, that will probably continue when the heavy hand of sleep shall have opened the ivory door of Fancy's temple.

At home, this creature of bright imaginings is not visible, on her receiving days, until four. She has the prudence to make you wait. In her house everything is in the best taste,—the very staircase breathes a cordial warmth, habits of luxury pervade her every moment, and are refreshed with unerring judgment? The costly trifles of the day are scattered in profusion, but seek not to compete with a museum of curiosities. No object of beauty is obscured by glass, cases of glass, or odious envelopes affixed by way of safeguard. Bright flowers rejoice the eyes on every side,—flowers, the only present she accepts—nor this, but from the selected few: flowers live not beyond the day, give pleasure, and require to be renewed;

these are to her, as they are in the East, a symbol and a promise. You will find her at her fireside seated on her *causeuse*, from whence she salutes you without rising: her conversation is no longer that of the ball; *there* it was your duty to amuse her—in her own house, it is her affair that you be entertained. How delicate are these shades;—the Parisian Lady comprehends them to perfection.

She values you as one who is to increase her circle of society,—a paramount object of solicitude with her: thus to fix you in her drawing-room she will exert a thousand wiles—it is in her own house that you feel how completely isolated is the woman of our day, and why it is that each desires to be the sun of her sphere—the one luminary of the world she lives for. Conversation is an impossibility without generalities; the epigram—that volume in a word—no longer turns, as it did in the 18th century, on persons or things, but on the most trifling events, and it perishes with the moment of its birth. The talent of the Parisian lady, if she have any, consists in throwing doubts on all things, while that of the Bourgeoise is to support and maintain them; this constitutes one great distinction between these two women. The Bourgeoise is unquestionably virtuous. The Parisian Lady is not sure that she is so, either in reference to the present or the future; she hesitates and resists, precisely where the other refuses—this indecision, as to all and everything, is one of the last graces which the existing state of society has left her. She goes rarely to church, but will talk to you of religion, and even seek to convert you, should you indulge in fashionable incredulity, for you will thus have given occasion to those pretty airs, those graceful gestures, those formal phrases, so delightful in every woman. "Ah! shame on you! I thought you too high-minded to attack religion!—what! you see society crumbling around us, and would remove its latest prop; but do you not perceive that religion, in these days, is our all—nay, our very selves—it is you—us,—our property, and the future existence of our children. Ah! do not let us be egotists! Selfishness is the vice of the age, and religion is its only corrective; it is that alone which unites those whom your laws tend to separate." Such will be her exclamations. She will enter on a serio-polemical homily, well sprinkled with political notions, and neither Catholic nor Protestant, but moral! oh, supremely moral! and you shall find it a perfect specimen of tissue, woven out of all the various modern doctrines, however opposed and irreconcilable they may be. Her lecture will manifest that she represents no less the confusion Intellectual, than the confusion Political of the day, just as she is surrounded externally by the brilliant but fragile products of an industry, ever busied in destroying its own works for the sole purpose of reproducing them. You leave her, saying to yourself, "She certainly *has* superiority of mind!"—and you think this all the more, because she has sounded the depths of your own heart with a most tender and delicate plummet. She has fathomed your secrets by appearing ignorant that she can learn them; but there are some things she *never* knows, however profoundly she may be acquainted with them. One thought alone disturbs you—you know nothing of her heart! The "great ladies" of old times threw no veils over the features of their lovers—they were posted up—announced,—universally known: but now-a-days, "the Lady" has her "preference"—ruled like music paper, with its minims, crotchets, quavers, sharps, flats, organ stops, and what not. Weak woman! she sports with the lightning! she will com-

promise neither her husband nor the welfare of her children —but neither will she give up her lover!—In our age, name and station are no longer held in respect sufficient to shelter those they dignify. The whole body of the Aristocracy will not now stand forward as a screen for the woman who has erred. "La femme comme il faut" cannot, like the "great lady" of by-gone days, march on by main force: she can trample no one under foot—it is herself who may be trampled on: hence she becomes a combination of jesuitical half-measures, and most ambiguous distinctions: carefully guarding all outward proprieties, she steers her slight bark among the breakers—the breath of the passions stealing none the less through her sails. This woman, so unfettered in the ball-room, so attractive on the promenade, is a slave in her home, and possesses independence only in her closet or her thoughts: she desires to be considered a model of propriety, and to seem so is her perpetual study;—she dreads her servants as an Englishwoman fears Doctors' Commons; for a woman now-a-days, if separated from her husband, may be reduced to some trifling annuity, and then, divested of all luxury, without a carriage, a box at the opera, or the deifying accessories of the toilet, she has no longer place or position—she becomes a nobody—a mere non-entity?

The Lady, therefore, may give occasion to many whispers, but never to open condemnation. She is something between English hypocrisy and the graceful frankness of the 18th century. She forms part of a false system, that indicates a period when nothing which follows resembles that which departs, and the transitions of which lead to no results; wherein all striking features are effaced, slight shades alone remain, and all distinctions are purely personal. In my opinion, it were impossible that any woman, were she next of kin to the very throne, should acquire, before her 25th year, that universal knowledge of nothings, that science of contrivances, those important trifles—great little things—those serpentine inflexions of voice, those harmonies of colour, those angelic devilries, those innocent villanies, the eloquence and silence, the seriousness and bantering, the tact and stupidity, the refined policy and unconscious ignorance which constitute "la femme comme il faut." Certain indiscreet persons have asked us if a literary lady be a lady "comme il faut?" If she have genius—yes, possibly: if not—she is then a lady such as —we must decline to describe.

And now what is this woman?—whence comes she?—to what family does she belong? We reply, she must take the position which the revolution has given to her; she is essentially a modern creation, a triumph of the elective system, applied to the fair sex. Each revolution has its pass-word, a word by which it depicts itself, and wherein its spirit is made manifest; to explain certain words, added from age to age to the French language, would be to write a magnificent history: "organise," for example, is a word of the Empire,—it is Napoleon concentrated! For nearly half a century we have been aiding and assisting the ruin of all social distinctions; we ought to have saved our women from this prodigious wreck; but the Civil Code has crushed them, too, in its progress!—The "Great Lady"—is dead; she has expired with her gorgeous solemnities of the past century—her powder, patches, high-heeled shoes, and well-stiffened stays, all bedizened with bows. A Duchess goes now through all doors without having any one of them enlarged for the passage of her hoop; in short, the Empire saw the last of the "long-trained

gowns." I have yet to learn why the Sovereign, who chose to see his court swept by satins and velvets, did not establish, by some irrevocable law, the right of primogeniture for, at least, certain families. Napoleon did not foresee the application of the code he so gloried in—in creating Duchesses, he gave birth only to our "femmes comme il faut:"—they resulted from his legislation, and may be called its "mediate product." The splendours of the social state have been demolished. Now-a-days, every booby who is competent to carry a head upright above his collar, to cover his broad chest with half an ell of satin by way of cuirass, display a brow with certain suspicious signs of apocryphal genius beneath curling locks, balance himself on shining pumps, surmounted by silk stockings at five shillings a pair, and hold his eye-glass between a frontal arch and distorted cheek, though he be a lawyer's clerk, the heir of a contractor, or a banker's son (with the bend sinister on his shield), may yet stare impertinently at the loveliest Duchess.

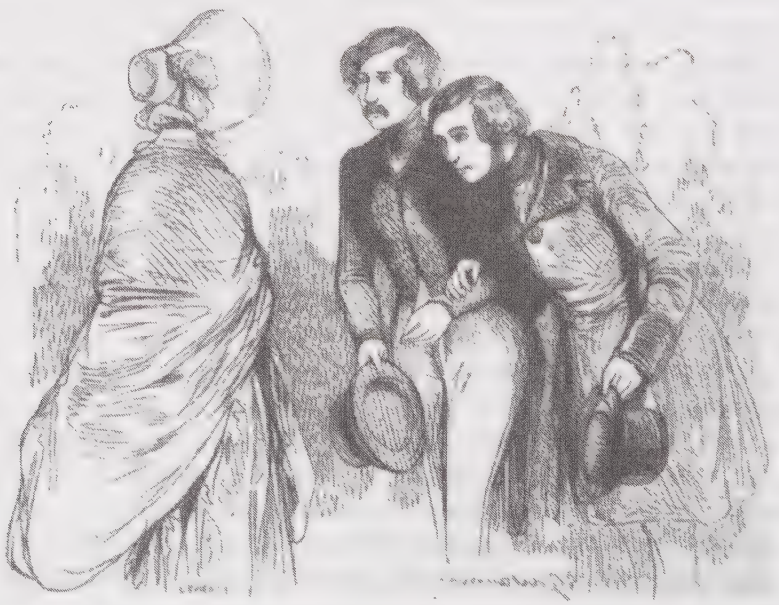
But what are the causes of this state of things? Let us see. A Duke of—what you please—under Louis XVIII. or Charles X., with 200,000 francs a year, a magnificent hotel and well-appointed household, might be still an important personage—(the last of these great French nobles, the Prince de Talleyrand, has just died.) This duke leaves four children, of whom two are daughters;—now, supposing all were married, neither of his heirs has more than 100,000 francs a year: each is the parent of several children, consequently is obliged to live in a mere "apartment" on the ground or first floor of some house, and that with the closest economy, or is even occupied, perhaps, in seeking "a fortune." Henceforward the wife of the eldest son is Duchess only in name,—she has neither equipage, servants, opera box, nor even leisure—for she nurses her babies, buys their dear little stockings, and educates her daughters, whom she no longer sends to a convent. The most noble among our women is thus become a respectable housewife—she is buried as completely in the duties of her married life, as the woman of the Rue St. Denis in her shop affairs—our era has none of the beautiful flowers of womankind which adorned the "great ages." The fan of the "great lady" is broken; it is not now, as it once was, the efficient auxiliary of the Graces, because Woman has half laid aside her airs; she has not now to bridle, blush, whisper, advance, or retire, as a kind of "parade exercise" necessary to be gone through: no—the fan is used but to agitate the air; and when a thing becomes applicable only to a purpose for which it was intended, it is too useful to be any longer a luxury.

All things in France have thus conspired to give influence to our "femme comme il faut." The aristocracy assented to her government by retiring to their distant seats, where they hide themselves to die. The women who might have moulded the manners of Europe—commanded opinion and fitted it as their glove—ruled the world by governing its rulers—the men of resource,—of thought,—they have committed the error of abandoning the field, because ashamed at having to contend with the middle classes, who, intoxicated with power, have thrown themselves into the arena to be torn in pieces, perhaps, by the brute multitude that is following rapidly in their steps. Thus, when the citizen goes to look at a princess, he perceives only a young person "comme il faut." No prince can, now-a-days, find "great ladies" to compromise; he cannot now render illustrious the object of his choice; the Duke de Bourbon was the last who attempted to exert this privilege,

and heaven only knows what it cost him. In these dreary times even princes themselves must be content with—"des femmes comme il faut"—each holding her opera box, merely in common with some half a dozen friends, and whom royal favour does not elevate a hair's breadth. No; she glides along silently between the stream of the noble and the city-born, neither altogether the one, nor yet wholly of the other.

The Press has taken the place of the Woman; it has become heir to that which was hers. She is no longer the speaking oracle! fair medium of delicious slanders in drapery of silken words. We have now Written Diaries, and these in a patois changing every third year,—gazettes, graceful as an ourang-outang, amusing as a death's head, and light as the lead of their types? French conversations are now made in revolutionary Iroquois from one end of France to the other, by long columns printed in ancient mansions, where the press groans and gnashes its teeth in halls, once hallowed by the brightest forms, and consecrated by discourse the most brilliant.

The knell of high society is sounding! Do you hear it?—the first stroke is the modern phrase of "La femme comme il faut;"—this woman, proceeding from the ranks of nobility, or put forward by the Bourgeoisie, coming indifferently from all parts, capital or province, is the type of the actual time—a last image of good taste, talent, grace, and distinction united, but all lessened and degenerated. We shall see no more "great ladies" in France, but there will long exist "des femmes comme il faut," sent by public opinion into a feminine Chamber of Peers, and which will be for the fair sex what the distinction of "Gentleman" is in England. And this is progress! Formerly, a woman might have the voice of a fish-seller, the stride of a grenadier, the brow of the boldest courtezan, a thick and heavy hand, and the foot of an elephant,—she was none the less a "Great Lady"—but now, were she a Montmorency (if the daughter of a Montmorency could be so degenerate,) she would be no longer "une femme comme il faut."





THE PARISIAN GROCER.



THE GROCER.*

BY H. DE BALZAC.



EVOID of feeling and gratitude must they be, who pass with indifference before the sacred threshold of a Grocer's door. Be the slouch-capped boy of the establishment ever so dirty and hideous,—be the jolly master ever so fresh and rosy, I regard them both with solicitude, and treat them with the same respect as is entertained towards their class by the *Constitutionnel*. I pass a king, or a bishop, or a funeral in the street without the least notice; but a Grocer, never. I fancy our French Grocer, whose dynasty is at most but a hundred years old, to be one of the best types of modern society. How resigned is he under unmerited wrong!—how great in usefulness and benefits!—what good things do we owe to him!—what light springs from him!—what sweetness in him has its source!

*The French Grocer (*Epicier*), is not exactly the counterpart of the English Grocer: he combines what is here called the "oil and Italian business" with the grocer's and tallowchandler's.

There are a few allusions in this witty diatribe of M. de Balzac, which are not quite intelligible to the English reader; but the following passage from No. 4 of the London Review, 1836, will explain, in few words, the most prominent points of the satire:—

"Since the Restoration, the Grocer has become the type of a class of men very widely diffused in France. There are coarse and narrow understandings which have neither the creed and feelings of the past, nor those of the future, and which maintain a fixed middle point amid the movement of ideas; this is what we call *l'Esprit Epicier*, applied to literature, to the arts, to the mode of living, and manifesting itself in manner, style, and taste, by something obsolete, vulgar, and awkward, tinged with the ridiculous; this spirit has created what we call *le Genre Epicier*." The *Constitutionnel* represents the opinions of this class.—Ed.

Is he not the American envoy, the Indian ambassador, the African plenipotentiary? —all this is he; and, best of all—without knowing anything about it.—Does the Obelisk know it is a monument?

Laughing is mighty well, but think first at whom! Did you ever go into a Grocer's shop without a gracious smile and a doffing of the hat, while you kept your beaver on? The butcher is rude: the baker pale and sulky: the Grocer alone, always anxious to oblige, shows in all quarters of Paris a smiling face. And to whom therefore does the foot-passenger apply in his perplexity? Does he tax the science of the crabbed watchmaker?—does he resort to the counter, where, guarded by bastions of bleeding meat, sits enthroned the rosy butcher's lady?—does he attack the baker behind his protective railing?—not them does he seek, but the Grocer. There he gets his small change and learns his way: he is sure of this man —the most christian of all tradesmen, although the most laboriqus—stealing time from himself to give it to the passer-by. Never mind how you disturb him, or what contributions you would levy on him: he is sure to greet you with a bow—nay, if the conversation passes mere question and answer, and grows confidential, the Grocer will show much interest about you. It is more easy, in Paris, to find a woman with a bad figure than a Grocer without politeness. Recollect this as an axiom; the Grocer is the victim of many strange calumnies, against which you can set it.

There are men, who, from a pinnacle of false grandeur,—or of an intellect that has grown squeamish and hard to please,—or of a very fine artistically-cut beard and whiskers, look down and cry *raca* on the Grocer. They have made his name to stand for a proverb, a class, a system, an opinion, a figure as European and encyclopædian as his shop. To express a whole series of insults at once, they cry out to a man, "You are a Grocer." Let us have done with these Diocletians of Grocery. Why do you blame a Grocer? Is it because he has chocolate-coloured, coffee-coloured, or green-tea-coloured breeches?—because he wears blue stockings in slippers?—because the tassel that dangles from his sealskin cap is of dirty green silver or of dingy black gold—because the triangular tail of his apron reposes on the region of his midriff? Is it this you find fault with, democrats that you are, and ant-like children of labour—for this, which is the praiseworthy emblem of labour? Is it because a Grocer is supposed to know nothing about arts, or literature, or politics? Who is it, pray, that has swallowed up the editions of Voltaire and Rousseau?—who buys the pictures of Dubufe?—who holds in reverence the Legion of Honour?—who cries at the melodrama?—who takes shares in impossible companies? —who reads Paul de Kock?—who caused the triumph of the Postillon de Lonjumeau?—who goes to and admires the museum at Versailles?—who buys gilt clocks, with Mamelukes on the top weeping over their chargers?—who is it that votes for the candidates of the opposition, and at the same time supports the strongest measures of the government?—the Grocer, the Grocer, I say—the Grocer. At the threshold of all emergencies, be they ever so perplexing, you find him ready and watchful, just as he is at his own door; he does not comprehend everything, but he supports everything by his labour, by his silence, by his energy and by his money! If we are not at this moment savages, Spaniards, or Saint Simonians, thank the noble army of Grocers: for it has maintained all things. Perhaps it

would maintain one system as well as another, Republicans, Imperialists, Bourbonists, Louis Philippists, all the same. "To maintain," is the Grocer's motto: if he did not maintain some social system, to whom would he sell? In a great crisis the Grocer is the representative of the consecrated opinion: he advances or he draws back, he speaks or he is silent. In all established humbugs, what a noble belief he has! Prevent him, if you can, from crowding to see the picture of Jane Grey, from subscribing for General Foy's children, from insisting on the restoration of Napoleon's ashes, from swearing by asphaltum, from dressing out his little son like a Polish lancer or a national guard, as the case may be: prevent him, if you can, all you bragging journals, you who bend pen and press to do him honour, you who smile on him, and in your newspaper traps put all sorts of baits to catch Grocers.

He is one of the bowels of society: we have not paid him sufficient attention;—the ancients would have deified him. You are a speculator, say, and have built a street, or perhaps a village. You find some sort of inhabitants; you have caught hold of a schoolmaster, and hope for children; and your something begins to wear a civilised look with it. Just as you make a pudding: you have plums, and suet, and treacle, and flour; you have got together a parson, a clerk, a beadle, a town-crier: it won't hold—all this little globe that you have been kneading will melt away into a mash without the Grocer; he is the strongest of all common ties—a social pudding-cloth. Unless you place a Grocer's shop in the high street, just as you have placed a cross on the steeple, you will have a deserted village. Bread, meat, tailors, shoes, clergymen, government, and their like, may come or go by post or by coach: but a Grocer must be there, must stay there, the first up, and the last a-bed: his shop perpetually open, to gossip in, to higgle in, to talk in; without him there would be none of the luxuries of modern society, unknown to the ancients, as were tea, brandy, tobacco, and sugar. For every want the Grocer will supply you with a triple satisfaction: he has tea, coffee, and chocolate, the beginning and end of all breakfasts: wax, tallow, and oil, the source of all lights: salt, pepper, and nutmeg, which are the rhetoric of the kitchen; sugar, syrups, and jams, that sweeten the cup of our existence; cheese, almonds, and raisins, without which what man could get his dessert? But why carry further the grocerial trilogies?—they embrace all the wants of life—is not the man himself a trilogy?—he is a juryman, an elector, a national guard. I don't know whether those who swear at him have under their left breasts a lump of stone; but, for my part, I never can look at his jar of marbles without thinking of the part he played in my youth. Ah! what a place does that man occupy in the hearts of little rogues to whom he sells tops, kite-strings, stick-liquorice, and barley sugar! He tracks our whole existence, this man!—he has a taper in his drawer to shine at your funeral, and a tear in his eye for your memory. He sells pens and ink to poets, colours to painters, and paste to every body. If a gambler has lost everything, the Grocer will sell him shot, powder, and poison; if he would win back his losses, our friend will sell him cards. Is your cousin Mary coming to tea with you?—you can't entertain her without the Grocer's aid: does she stain her dress?—who sells starch, soap, and soda, but the Grocer? If, on some sleepless night, you cry for light, lo! at hand is the Grocer's phosphorus box: if you trip it on light

fantastic toe, look down,—you see his blacking in your pumps. He has cognac for soldiers, and eau de Cologne for ladies; to the old pensioner he sells the eternal snuff, performing its incessant circulation through snuff-box, nose, and handkerchief, making the nose of an inveterate snuff-taker as much an emblem of infinity as the serpent with its tail in its mouth. The Grocer sells drugs that will cause your death, and substances which will bring you to life. He has sold himself to the public, as a witch to Satan, and is of our social state the end and beginning. Not a step nor a league; not a crime nor a good action; not a day's work, nor a day's pleasure; not a mistress nor a friend, can be moved, done, passed, or helped, without the Grocer. He is Civilisation behind a counter, Society in whited-brown paper, Necessity armed from head to feet,—Life itself distributed into drawers, boxes, and canisters. We have heard some one prefer a Grocer's patronage to that of a king; for a king kills, a Grocer gives life. Be abandoned by everybody,—by your creditors, and even your mother; if you have a Grocer for a friend, you will live in his house as jolly as a mouse in a cheese.

By what fatality then has this pivot of society, this tranquil instance of practical philosophy, this perpetual industry,—by what fatality has the Grocer been pitched on to stand as the type of stupidity? What virtues does he not possess?—he possesses all, all. Have you ever seen the National Guard turn out, to welcome the illustrious living, to follow the illustrious dead—to the tomb or to the palace?—who are those who march? Long, glorious, waving lines of Grocers. As for their constancy, it is fabulous; there is not one of these men but cheerfully cuts off his ears daily with his shirt collars: there is not one of them but gaily goes through, from day to day, the same series of jokes with his customers. To see the sympathy with which he takes the last twopence from the widow or the orphan, is enough to break your heart;—to see his modesty in the presence of his betters, is enough to make one proud of human nature!

Suppose that the Grocers refused any longer to become peers of France or deputies; suppose they declined to illuminate on public days; to give directions to bewildered wanderers, coppers to beggars, and a glass of wine to the woman who has been taken ill at the corner of the street, (even without knowing her character). Suppose the Grocer left off reading the *Constitutionnel*; suppose he made a joke of the Legion d'honneur, and took to reading the books he purchased for waste paper; went abroad with the schoolmaster, vowed the National Guard was a humbug, pretended to love music, and to understand metaphysics; suppose he did all this—we should despise him; he would then deserve to be the butt of caricaturists, the object of satire, the wretched puppet of the hour. But he does none of these things. Look at him, oh! my fellow-countrymen; and what do you see in him? a man for the most part short, commonly punchy, ordinarily with a considerable stomach—a good father, husband, master.

Stop at the word master. If there be happiness in the world, the Grocer's boy represents it. A little Grocer's boy hath a red face and a blue apron, and beyond this, nothing. His joy is to dawdle on the shop-step, and ogle she-passengers in the street. He jokes with customers, he admires his mistress, he is happy with a ticket to the play: his master he considers to be a mighty man, and longs for the day when he, like Mr. Grocer, shall shave his chin in the round looking-glass, and,

like him, shall have a wife to air his shirts and neckcloth, and lay out his pantaloons. To turn shepherd and live in Arcadia, as Poussin would have it, is a mere joke. The Grocer's happiness is one of the most enviable of the world.

Rogues of the pen and pencil, who sneer at Genius and Grocers alike, let us admit that a certain little round belly *does* distinguish the latter, and may give occasion to a little satire. Yes, truly, it must be admitted, that at reviews, when the National Guards present arms, the Grocers present likewise a stomachic bulge, which perhaps deranges the symmetry of the line. Of this waviness we have heard puffy colonels bitterly complain. But who ever heard of a thin or a pale Grocer? Such a man would be dishonoured. Would you have a Grocer passionate or romantic? No: they have, once for all—bellies. Louis XVIII. had one—Napoleon had one. Here are two noble instances; quarrel not with the Grocer for his. Consider how much more readily he will open his books to you than your friends will their purses, and pardon him this defect, if it be one; if Grocers were not subject to become bankrupts, they would be the types of the good, the useful, and the beautiful.

They have a fault, perhaps, in the eyes of delicate persons;—they *will* love a small country house ten miles from Paris, with 20 perches of garden: they *will* have yellow calico window-curtains and carved plush-bottomed chairs. Their diamond shirt pins too, and the wedding rings which they wear, are perhaps ridiculous: but pray remember, the one betokens a man of property, whilst the other signifies marriage, and no one ever thought of a Grocer yet without a wife. Even she, poor thing, has been dragged down into our satirical hell. They say, that since the Revolution the Grocer's wife gives herself airs, and wants to go to court. And why not? What woman, seated all day at a counter, has not sometimes a longing to leave it? Why should not citizens gather round citizen kings? And whither should virtue betake itself but to the neighbourhood of the throne? We say virtue,—for the Grocer's wife is virtuous. Rarely does conjugal unfaithfulness afflict him. His lady has neither will to betray him, nor occasion: betwixt the counter and him her hours are passed, and her love for both is so absorbing, that her flesh disappears, as you will have remarked—her soul wears away her body, and Grocer's wives are universally thin. Just take a cab, and, driving through all Paris, look at these ladies; they are all meagre, pale, yellow, weazened. Medicine has opined, that from colonial produce rise certain noxious exhalations, which cause this wasting of the frame. Pathology has hinted, that long sessions at the counter, perpetual watchfulness, chattering, and movement of the arms, are hurtful; and street-doors eternally wide open, occasion cold and elicit redness of the nose. However this may be, true it is, that the Grocer's lady is faithful, and that nowhere is Hymen more honoured than by those of her class.

A Grocer, wherever you may chance to meet him, never says bluntly and coarsely "my wife," *ma femme*,—he speaks of her as "my good lady," *mon épouse*. "My wife," is a vile, coarse, crude, vulgar, slip-slop, low-life term, and changes a divine creature at once into a common thing Savages have wives: civilized beings have their spouses, "épouses," or good ladies. When, therefore, the Grocer goes abroad with his partner, you may see in his port the consideration with which he regards her, and as such a respect is unusual, the caricaturists never fail to

be at his heels. He seems so happy to quit his shop; his lady so seldom makes what we call a toilette; her clothes are so stiff, and stick out so, that a Grocer, ornamented with his wife, occupies more room on the public way than any other couple. He has taken off his cap and his round jacket, and you would scarcely know him from any common individual, but for the words "ma bonne amie," which, in explaining the alterations in the town, he addresses to his lady, who stirs out so seldom, as not to know the new improvements of the capital. Sometimes, of holidays, he even ventures on a country excursion, on which occasion he seats himself in the most dusty part of the woods of Auteuil or Vincennes, and swears by the freshness of the air. There, as every where, do you know him under all disguises, by the peculiarity of his phraseology and his opinions. You are going by the coach to Melun, or Orleans: you find yourself opposite a decent man, who examines you with a suspicious air, and you lose yourself in conjecture regarding this silent individual. Is he a lawyer? Is he a Peer of France? What is he? A lady begins to speak; she is ill—not yet recovered, she says, from the cholera. The conversation is begun; the Unknown opens his mouth to speak, and says—

"Mosieu"—you know him at once: it is the Grocer. A Grocer does not say *Monsieur*, which is affected: nor *Msieu*, which is infinitely contemptuous—*Mosieu* is the very term: it is between respect and protection, expresses consideration, and gives to the sentence a pleasant, melodious twang. "Mosieu," says he, "during the cholera, the three great doctors of Paris, Dupuytren, Broussais, and Mosieu Majendie, treated their patients with different remedies: almost all died. They did not know what the cholera was, Sir;—the cholera, Sir, is a disease of which people die. That was a bad time, Sir, for trade, the time of the cholera,—a bad time, Sir."

You then try him upon politics. His politics are simply these: "Mosieu—these ministers don't seem to know what they are about. There's no use in changing them—it's always the same thing. It was only under the Emperor that they did their business: but then, what a man, Sir! What a loss had France in losing him, Sir! To think of their not standing by him!"

You will then discover that the Grocer's religious opinions are extremely reprehensible. For him, Beranger's Songs are as Holy Writ. Yes, these detestable "refrains," adulterated with politics, have done mischief which will long be felt by Grocery. A hundred years will, perhaps, elapse before a Grocer of Paris (those in the country are less possessed by the spirit of song) enters Paradise.

If the journey were a short one, and the Grocer did not speak,—a rare case,—you would recognize him by the manner in which he blew his nose. He puts one corner of his handkerchief between his teeth, holds it up by the middle like a pair of scales, takes a magisterial grasp of his nose, and winds such a flourish as would make a key-bugle jealous.

Some of those people who have a mania for diving into every thing, have discovered one great disadvantage in the Grocer. He retires, they say. When he has retired, no soul can find any use in him. What does he do? What becomes of him? His distinctive marks disappear, and we are interested in him no more. You never hear of a Grocer's son, as his defenders proudly assert, becoming a painter

or a journalist: he is either a notary or an attorney, and thus the father Grocer is authorized to say, "I have paid my debt to my country." Should he have no son, the Grocer has a successor in whose fate he takes an interest: he encourages him: he comes daily to examine the amount of sales, or his books, and to compare them with the sales of his time. He advances him money, and, by the thread of discount, still hangs on to Grocery. Who does not know that touching anecdote of which a Grocer is the hero?

One of the old school, who, thirty years long, had breathed the thousand odours of his own floor,—had descended the stream of life in company with myriads of herrings, and floated down cheek by jowl with an infinity of cods,—had swept away the periodical mud of a hundred early customers, and handled a store of good large greasy coppers; one of these Grocers, finding himself rich beyond his desires, having buried his wife snugly, and having the receipts of the cemetery-company filed and docketed regularly among his family papers, sold his business, and was free. The first day he walked about Paris like a gentleman; looked at the people playing dominoes in the cafés, and even went to the play. But he was uncomfortable: he prowled about the Grocers' shops, and listened to the braying of the pestle in the mortar; and in spite of himself, when he saw a Grocer standing at his shop door and taking the air, he said in his heart, "Thou wast once like *him*." Overcome by the magnetism of Grocery, he went to visit his successor. All things went well, and our friend returned home with a heavy heart. "*I'm all over something*," said he to the Doctor in consulting him; and the Doctor ordered him to travel, without positively mentioning Switzerland or Italy. He did travel: after several long journeys to Saint Germain, to Montmorency, to Vincennes, the poor Grocer, falling away daily, could hold no more, but returned to his shop as the dove to his nest, repeating his famous proverb, "*I am like the ivy, I die where I attach myself*." He got leave from his successor to make paper bags in the corner, and occasionally to replace him at the counter. That eye, which had become like the orb of a boiled cod, is now once more lighted again with gleams of pleasure. Of an evening, you may see him at the coffee-house at the corner, where he mourns the present decaying state of the Grocers? Quackery, he says, has penetrated even amongst them; and what the deuce do they want with these fine machines for grinding chocolate?

Many Grocers, the cleverest among them, when retired into the country, become mayors of small villages, and thus cast over the country the graces of Parisian civilisation. There they begin the first volume of the Rousseau or Voltaire they have bought, but never live to read beyond page 18 of the preface. Always useful to their country, they are always active; they repair the village-pump, or they cut down the curate's perquisites, and thus check the monstrous aggressions of the priesthood; or they get up petitions against capital punishments and negro slavery; or they write to the Constitutionnel to explain their views, and look out vainly for an answer.

I have but one fault to find with Grocers;—there are too many of them. The Grocer himself will allow it. He is too common. Moralists who have made observations on the Grocer when out of the latitude of Paris, pretend also to discover some change in his distinguishing qualities when he turns landed proprietor, and

quits trade. The Ex-Grocer becomes slightly ferocious, sends lawyer's letters, issues writs, and puts in seizures, may be: but let it pass.

Examine mankind and their different species: study their peculiarities; and tell us, in this vale of tears, what is complete? Deal mildly with Grocers; even if *they* were perfect, what would become of us? we should be compelled to adore them,—to mount them on that throne of which they are at present the stout conservatives. For mercy's sake, then, O ye gigglers to whom this memoir is addressed, be gentle with these interesting bipeds, and torment them no more. Have you not enough to do with politics, and new plays, and new books?





THE GRISETTE.



THE GRISETTE.

BY JULES JANIN.



DID one seek, among the various articles of Parisian produce, to point out that which is the most incontestably Parisian, one would fix on the Grisette. In distant countries, travel where you will, and whithersoever your vagabond humour may lead you, you will find museums and palaces, triumphal arches and royal gardens, churches and cathedrals, more or less gothic: and will jostle against cits and grandees, prelates and captains, poor beggars and noble lords; but in no city in Europe, whether London, Berlin, Petersburg, or Rome, will you meet with that little something, so fair, so fresh, so young, so slim, so active, smiling, merry, and easily-content, which we call *Grisette*; no, not in Europe,—but why say Europe? Go through all France, and only in Paris will you meet her; the real Grisette,—the true, authentic, easy, careless, reckless, gladsome, frolicsome Grisette.

A plague on our *savants*;—they are for finding an etymology to every thing, and have given themselves a world of trouble to learn the derivation of the word *Grisette*. Grisette, they say, first signified a grey-stuff gown which poor people wore: and therefore (after the manner, "Tell me what you *wear*, and I will tell you what you *are*,") poor people who wear grey stuff gowns are to be called Grisettes, and therefore Grisettes wear grey stuff gowns. Mad *savants*! as if our pretty Duchesses of

the band-box—our gracious little Countesses that trip it afoot—our delicate Marchionesses that live on the labour of their little fingers; our gallant aristocracy of the workshop and counter, were condemned all their life long to wear a dismal robe of wool!—as if they had renounced for ever, sweet anchorites! all the joys of life—all the pleasures of gay ribands and embroidery—of new gloves and new slippers, and other such cheap charms, and pretty resources of coquetry, as are in the reach of all who are poor, and fair, and young!

So much for the etymologists, then. Away with their etymologies and them: the poor old worn-out creatures have survived all human passions: and in such subjects as these—pretty specimens of our French coquetry—what can they discover or describe? Life, beauty, gaiety, are above definitions; and the only way to understand the fair Grisette world,—a world in our world apart,—is to watch them well. Go abroad of early morning, and mark who is the first woman that wakes, while all the rest of the city is sleeping. It is the Grisette, who rises a moment after the sun, and straightway makes herself beautiful for the rest of the day. Her little toilette is quickly over; her shining locks are combed; her dress from head to foot is neat as neat can be,—ay, truly,—has she not fashioned every morsel of it and sewn every stitch of it, and washed it and smoothed it with her own fair fingers? Drest herself, she dresses up the little garret which she inhabits, and sets in order the poor nothings which she possesses: decorating her poverty as other women know not how to adorn their wealth. This done, she gives one last glance at the looking-glass; and, having assured herself that she is as pretty to-day as she was yesterday, away she goes to her labour. Here, in fact, lies that point in our Grisette's character which is the most touching and respectable. An idle Grisette is not of the nature of Grisettes: who says "Grisette," names a little being who is always charming and easily happy, and ever labouring and busy. Let her grow idle, and she is no longer in the department of honest Grisettes. She becomes quite a different thing,—she has passed the slight boundary which separates her and vice. Don't let me talk of her,—she will spoil our subject.

Well, since she *does* labour, what is the labour of the Grisette? It would be more easy to tell you what it is not:—a Grisette is good for every thing, knows every thing, can do every thing. A legion of laborious ants, they say, will produce a mountain; a Grisette is like an ant. These little creatures, so active, so slight, so poor, (Heaven knows *how* poor,) perform as many prodigies as armies. Under their active and industrious hands cloth, velvet, silk, gauze, are fashioning themselves endlessly and ceaselessly. To all these they give shape, and life, and grace; they create them, so to speak; and, thus created, scatter them over the whole of Europe, where, believe me, their innocent and repeated conquests at the point of the needle have been a thousand times more durable than our victories at the point of the sword.

Thus they spread over the city, our poor artisans, fair or dark, rosy or pale, and gaily perform their tasks. They clothe the fairest portion of the human race, and their light fingers execute, as if at play, the most difficult labours which female caprice in its most ingenious fits of coquetry can invent or impose. Over the mode, they reign despotic. They embroider queens' mantles, and shape shepherdesses'

aprons. And think how universal French taste must be, that these little girls, children of the poor, who will die as poor as their mothers, should thus become the all-powerful interpreters of fashion over the whole world! Destroy this intelligent and laborious population, and adieu at once to all the grace of Europe. Even now I can fancy all the great coquettes of this world dressed at hazard, that is, ill-dressed; asking in amaze of one another, "What *will* become of us!"

In this position, which is at once so high and so subordinate; placed as they are between the most exaggerated luxury that the great can invent, and the poverty which falls to their own proper lot, the poor things must have no small share of prudence, as well as courage, to resist this luxury and this poverty. Scarcely out of the little garret which she inhabits, the poor Grisette is introduced into the most splendid shops and sumptuous houses: here she reigns, and here she dictates her laws without appeal. All day long she presides over the coquetry of the rich, and dresses them and decks them; she envelopes these corpses, hideous as they sometimes are, in tissues the most precious: she knows every secret resource and disguise of these beauties, so often deceitful. How often has she made the lean one plump, the crooked one straight, the plain one handsome! And when at last the idol is thus decked by those hands so white and so pretty, perhaps the idol's lover arrives, to carry to fête or ball, not the woman, who is ugly, but the dress, which is beautiful; he never thinks of the poor girl who has made it, and who is a thousand times more beautiful than she who wears it—of our young artist, following most likely with saddened looks the woman whom she has created, and sighing to herself, "And yet I am prettier than that!" Indeed, indeed, it is a mighty temptation, and a mighty courage alone can resist it. One can fancy that a man should pass before a heap of gold and not touch it; his probity saves him: but in a young and pretty girl, who, from being obscure and unknown as she is, can win all hearts in a moment and have all the world at her feet, if she will but dress herself in yonder gauze which has been created by her needle, the courage of resistance is wonderful indeed. She is alone: the dress is finished: the flowers are ready for the hair, the light scarf for the fair shoulders, the riband for the waist, the slipper for the foot, the glove for the delicate hand: what prevents the humble chrysalis from becoming butterfly on the instant,—what prevents the poor girl from realizing at once all the fairest dreams of her life, winning the love of the men, and exciting the jealousy of the whole female race? Thus dressed she becomes immediately the equal of the fairest, one of the queens of the world: then it is that her youth shines forth: she is the pride of our fêtes, the joy of our theatres,—art, luxury, fashion, power, open on her on a sudden, and her triumph is secure. No more labour, no more poverty! Victory! victory! But no: this humble poverty shall not be overcome; our heroine will resist this temptation of every day; she will give back the dress to its purchaser, and will console herself with her songs, her gaiety, and her twenty years. Do you know how much they pay the Grisette for all her labours and heroism? Little more than our Alexanders and Cæsars, at twopence a day. To clothe her, to feed her, to lodge her, to dress the little flower-box before her window,—for the meat for her bird who sings in his cage; for the bunch of violets which she buys every morning while going to work; for those pretty little shoes, always so smart and so glossy; for all that

elegance which shines over her from head to foot, and which would make many a lady of fashion proud; for all this our poor Grisette has hardly as much as would buy a poor clerk his breakfast. And yet with so little, so little as nothing,—she is gay, she is happy; all that she asks for her in her way is a little kindness and a little love.

It is not all difficult the way, or rather the modest path of life over which the poor thing trips so lightly; many wild-flowers grow among the thorns, and many little blessings are meted out so as to suit her. She has in her purse that gold which mediocrity can manufacture so cheaply, and which is more precious and inexhaustible than all the gold of Peru. She is "content with little—content with nothing." Love and Poetry, the two angels who encourage and console, accompany her always. She is bound to poetry by her poverty, first, and then by her profession: and to love by her fresh beauty and native graces. There is a little world of youth in our Paris, to whom the Grisette is a Providence. What would that beardless race, which forms the honour and glory of our colleges, be without her? She is the goddess, patroness too, of lawyers without briefs; of deputies without seats; of generals without epaulets. Not a young man who lives in Paris upon a meagre allowance and his expectancies, but has won the heart of one of these pretty little Countesses of the Rue Vivienne. Love, labour, economy, the lovers have these among them, and each brings to the common stock all that he possesses: in the first place, nothing; next, a very fine appetite; and, lastly, a great store of carelessness; they are three of the principal ingredients in happiness, and what would one with more? During the week our pair of turtles are separated, and each works on his own side: one dissects bodies, for instance, the other dresses them; one studies the rights of persons, the other the robes of persons. Scarcely, during all this period, can they see each other, smile at each other; scarcely once can the lover get a peep through the half-drawn window-curtain at the shop, where his mistress is working. But Sunday comes, and then no more work; farewell to needles and pins, good-bye to law-books and counters! Sunday comes; it is the day when he is rich, and she is beautiful; and both are loving, as if to make up for the time lost in the week. Away, then, hie the pair; away to Versailles or Montmorency, Saint Germain or Saint Cloud;—he has his new coat, and his best waistcoat, and all his week's savings in his pocket; she has her smartest bonnet, and her prettiest band; and off they go to take possession of every court or corner in the neighbourhood of Paris. At the aspect of these innocent loves, the rich and the idle retire, and give them place: they know that Sunday belongs to Grisettes and Students exclusively; and thus, in the country during the summer, in the town during the winter, over one day in the week they reign paramount. They fill the woods and they fill the theatres; all the flowers of the fields are theirs, and all the tears of the melodrama. Fifty-two days of reign have they in the year: what other earthly power lasts for so long a time?

In this fashion the young man's last youth passes away; and, supported as it were on the poor little Grisette's fair shoulder, he marches up to eminence; he becomes something, lawyer, physician, sub-lieutenant; and then ambition seizes on him, and love quits him, and he grows too great (ingrate as he is) for his merry

little friend of the merry old times: he abandons her alone to that misery which two together easily can bear: and exchanges this loving heart for a few acres of land, or a few bags of money, that his country bride brings him. And she, poor girl, where is she? She weeps, and she resigns herself, and she consoles herself, and then, perhaps, she begins over again. Often, even, she marries; a woful change, indeed! from society to tears, from merry poverty to sordid and vulgar indigence. All is over with her: it is now the butterfly which becomes a chrysalis. She does not die, luckily, without leaving a tolerable provision of Grisettes to succeed her.

It is wisest, however, not to examine things too closely, lest the dark side of the picture overpower the bright. There is no rose but hath its leaves scattered by the breeze; no fruit but is subject to the ravages of the canker-worm: and Heaven be thanked, it is not all of these charming girls whose lives are doomed to so melancholy a close. Some escape by chance, others by good fortune, and a few by virtue —virtue as understood by the moralists. And *à propos* of virtue, I will relate to you the history of Jenny.

Jenny's means of life were—but I hardly know how to explain them to you, my fair readers. As she had, however, a kind heart and a pure mind, it is right that she should have her little biography, if only a page, set apart in our artistical collection. Jenny, then, was useful to Art. I will call her Jenny the *Flower-girl*, because when she first came to Paris she sold roses and violets—pale as herself, poor child. There are but two or three places in Paris where the sale of flowers is likely to be profitable. Around the Opera, where the gas is brilliant, and women arrayed in laces and diamonds throng to drink of the stream of rich harmony, the sale is sure; but when Jenny came to Paris she sought only to sell her flowers on the *Pont des Arts*,—flowers without colour or perfume, emblems but too genuine of academic poetry*,—flowers gathered the day before, and therefore such as only Grisettes would purchase. No wonder that Jenny had but ill success!

Jenny the Flower-girl wept and waited in vain. There were old men,—city rakes, who made certain proposals to Jenny, and overwhelmed her with words of double meaning. She neither heeded nor understood them. An old libertine is the ugliest specimen of humanity! The poor girl, however, continued to sell her flowers when she could find purchasers; but these were so few and so far between, that she resolved to quit the miserable trade at any price. At any price, did I say? I should have excepted the price of her innocence, which Jenny would not have bartered for the miserable fortune which fades so quickly, and leaves nothing but shame. "Take courage, then—courage, Jenny! fear not for your pretty face: the happiness of innocence is still in store for your youth and beauty! Your rosy cheeks, slender fingers, elegant figure, noble carriage, and Arab feet, which mould into graceful form even your worn shoes, were never meant for debasement.

"Come to my studio, Jenny! remain at a distance; you have nothing to fear. Place yourself in the ray of the sun, my child; be mute and calm, while I envelope you with art and poetry. You shall be my idol for a day—a painter's idol. Already can I embody some of the transporting visions of my sojourn in Italy. Stir not,

* The building of the French Academy is opposite to the *Pont des Arts*.

Jenny; remain under the spell of my pencil till thine image is fixed upon my canvass and in my soul. What metamorphoses will be thine! As a holy virgin, men will prostrate themselves at thy feet and adore thee. As a sweetly smiling girl, thou wilt be the dream of the young poet, the inspirer of his verse. Now, be grave for a moment; raise thine arched eyebrows, repress that smile, and thou shalt be a queen, lady! Again, recline thy cheek upon thy hand, softly smile, abandon thyself to the poetic languor of a girl dreaming, and I will paint thee as the mistress of Raphael or Rubens, which is more than if I were to make thee the mistress of a king.

"Jenny—all-inspiring, inexhaustible theme—come: inspiration has seized and oppresses me,—the fervour of art is in my veins,—my palette is charged with the colours of the iris,—my pencils surround me,—I am breathless as a hound panting for the chase. Come, come—it is time, Jenny!" And Jenny approached, docile as the imagination itself to all the heavenly impulses of innocence and poetry in art.

At the wish of the artist she became a beautiful Greek girl, like those who were the models of Apelles, when the sculptor would portray the Goddess of Beauty and Love. Now she transformed herself into a pensive beauty—an exquisitely-formed Athenian; then a matron of the empire, or of the time of Juvenal; anon, coming from the festival, listening to the songs of the Bacchanals, or reading Horace's Ode to Glycere or Neera; and once more she is rich and beautiful, reclining in a litter borne by Gallic slaves, substituting the costume of summer for that of winter. But what should be before all, and is perhaps last thought of,—has poor Jenny breakfasted this morning? Imagine what it is for a poor girl to remain in a fixed attitude, immovable and mute, for hours—who must unite tenderness or anger, disorder or love, with the most perfect calmness! The artist's model is the greatest of all actresses—the sole representative—with but one spectator, and the action continuing through a summer's day—with the slightest possible portion of drapery; a queen with a handkerchief for her crown,—a dancer with a black apron for her ball dress; or, on the other hand, portraying a holy martyr, with eyes upraised towards heaven, and singing one of Beranger's songs! Poor girl, she is whirled from one extreme to the other at the caprice of the artist; burnt, strangled, crucified, or surrounded with all the luxury and voluptuousness of the East. She is alternately in heaven and in hell: now an archangel, with golden wings,—and at a word she is debased into a courtezan, with wanton and ignoble eye and carriage. She is everything, passing through all conditions of life; now a proud lady, a citizen, a queen, a goddess! And where are the grateful, the sustaining plaudits? Not a single clapping of hands,—not the slightest share of the just admiration excited by the *chef-d'œuvre* itself. The spectator gazes upon the picture, and exclaims with rapture, "What a divine woman!—what eyes—what hands—what an inspired head!" The artist is lauded to the skies, riches and honours are showered upon him; but there is not even a compensating look for Jenny, poor Jenny, who inspired the picture!

Strange combination of beauty and misery, of ignorance and art, of intelligence and apathy! Singular abandonment of a beautiful person! But not so wholly, either;

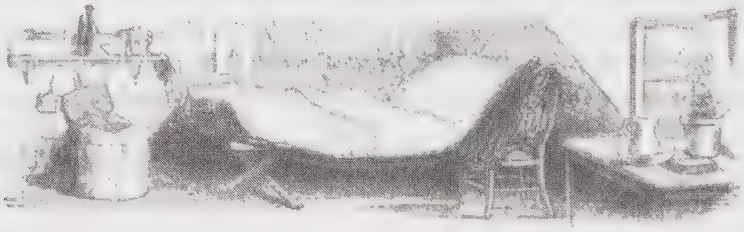
Jenny continued chaste after obeying implicitly the caprices of the most whimsical of men. Art is a universal refuge for all who seek an excuse for actions unappreciable by the vulgar. Art purifies and exalts all within reach of its influence, even to the poor girl who confides her person to the artist's skill. The artist and the subject are alike favoured; the undisguised forms of beauty belong to them, confided without shrinking or regret.

And Jenny was as modest as she was beautiful. She submitted to the artist willingly in all that belonged to Art; but there she paused. When the artist was tempted to become a man, Jenny quitted her brilliant character to become a simple woman, in order to defend herself. She resumed her humble garments, and went her way. A queen, or even a saint, could not have won more regard and esteem than Jenny!

"What has become of her?" Would you know? She has filled and is filling our churches with such beautiful saints as even a Protestant would worship. She has peopled our apartments with graceful pictures, and sculptures to delight the eyes and gladden the hearts of all. She has given her expressive face and her delicate hands to the historical painters; her sweet influence has been felt in the studios of all our great artists, to whom it has long been a guarantee of success to have Jenny for a model. And Jenny disdained to extend her patronage to inferior talent; she confined her fair face only to genius,—in genius alone had she faith. If the favoured artist were poor, Jenny gave credit and encouragement; she has, in truth, done more for the art than our three last ministers, all put together. But, alas! the Art has lost Jenny,—lost the finest and most beautiful model, but not without return and without hope.

And what has become of Jenny? She has experienced the good fortune which we should like to see attend every young, pretty, and virtuous woman; she has become rich and happy; and what good women always are, much respected, caressed, beloved. And though now a great lady, she has preserved her enthusiastic love of Art; in fact, has remained an artist. She has, it is true, exchanged her humble garments, her simple neckerchief and worn shawl, for diamonds, cachemires, embroidered dresses, and all the luxuries and refinements which wealth can procure. She has gloves of Venice for her white hands, the perfumes of the East for her soft skin, a title and servants: but hesitate not to approach. Amid all the surrounding pomp, there is still Jenny—Jenny the Flower-girl—Jenny the artist's model. If you are a great artist—if your name is Gerard, Ingres, Delaroche, or Vernet, when you want a woman's hand, Jenny will throw down her Venice gloves; or, should you need a bust, Jenny will take off her cachemire: if you are painting an Atalanta, and require a leg and foot of exquisite proportions, Jenny the Duchess will as readily lend you hers as did Jenny the Flower-girl; she is so natural, so ingenuous, so devoted to the Art,—loving beauty for its own sake, and pleased to be beautiful, because she can every where win admiration,—on canvass, in marble, in bronze, or in plaster. The Art, then, need not regret Jenny's fortune, since it is still her delight and happiness to belong to it. Art, indeed, has but lent her in marriage to a great lord, who is bound to restore her to the necessities of the artist as if it were by an express stipulation in the marriage contract.

Such is the simple and affecting history of Jenny the Flower-girl. I make no apology for introducing it here; for, does not the Beauty which inspires a great work of art deserve at least a share of the glory and the reward with the hand that executes it? But to conclude as I began:—Where else, in all the world, can be found a little being like this—ready for whatever may befall it—for sadness or gaiety, for smiles or tears, for self-denial of every kind, for labour or idleness, for vice or virtue,—supporting as well the extreme of enjoyment as of misery—her temper always alike under all the vicissitudes of fortune—as happy in coarse stuff as in the finest silk—as much at ease in the drawing-room as in the garret,—speaking or singing at once the language of the Versailles of Louis XIV. and that of the Paris Gardens of 1839;—now a stately lady of rank, now a laughing and frolicksome girl,—now poet or artist, now woman of the world,—now overflowing with spirits, now thoughtful and discreet,—now a coquet, now really in love,—always good-tempered and lively, and prepared for everything,—and, to sum up all in one word, the true, complete, and unique—*Grisette of Paris?*



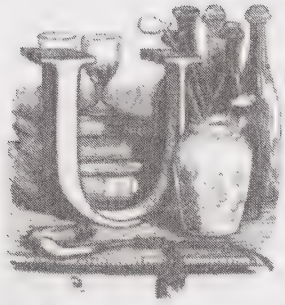


THE LAW-STUDENT.



THE LAW STUDENT.

BY E. DE LA BÉDOLLIERRE.



NDER the age of eighteen the young *aspirant* leaves the High-school. He has taken his first degree, after having gone through his classes—that is, after a ten years' thumbing of good dictionaries has taught him to construe Virgil, and to con Æsop's fables. His father and mother, sitting in their chimney-corner, consult upon the future destiny of their only son. "He must study the law," says the father, with the gravity of a sage; "the law is indispensable to finish his education, and there is nothing that a barrister may not arrive at."

Oh, simple patriarch! oh, unsuspecting parent! to what does the name of barrister lead? What becomes of the thousands of scholars who crowd the forms of the Law-school year after year? Are they all placed and provided for?—are they the ornaments of the bar and the bench?—Alas, the greater part of them never set foot in court. A few may become notaries, or attorneys, or clerks of the courts, but the remainder are scattered in a hundred professions. That broker who dabbles in the transfer of stocks in trade without a business,—has studied the law. That stroller, who hawks his misery and his tinsel on the rustic stage—has studied the law. That public scribbler, who composes love-letters for lady's-maids, and poetry for the blacking shops—has studied the law. That dramatist, who fires the stage with the terrors of melodrama,—has been called to the bar. Every branch of public and private business—the army, the shops, the very stalls and booths, are crowded

by ex-students, in ignoble disguise, who regret the three years they lost under pretext of studying the laws—of which they do not know a word.

But, notwithstanding all this, every year, in the month of November, a throng of lads arrive from all the corners of France, to take up their quarters in the lodging-houses of the "Quartier Latin," the land of Latin—a huge camp of learners, whose outposts reach from the Pont-Neuf on the one hand, to the Barrière d'Enfer on the other.

Our new-comer is soon installed. He has paid his immatriculation: he has chosen his professors; and he has made his first appearance at lecture, where he will take care to show himself as little as possible. What more does he want!—a companion to share the cares of life—and to brush his boots. On this search he starts: an acquaintance from his own part of the world, a two-year-man, whose distinguished manners and forcible conversation dazzled the great people of his native place during the whole of last vacation, has been entreated by the worthy parents of our freshman to guide the tyro, amidst the perils of that accursed Babylon, to which the heir of their hopes has been sent with so many fears and sighs.

Full of his important charge, the Mentor loses no time in introducing his Telemachus to the mysteries of the Bal Montesquieu, as much for the purpose of forming his pupil at once to good habits as of renewing a few old acquaintances of his own.

A quadrille and two galopades are quite sufficient to cast our young student at the feet of his charming partner. She answers to the name of Irma, Amanda, or some other name of the same family. How modest she is! he could not get her to tell him where she lives: but he will soon find her out. He watches her; he pounces upon her on the narrow side-way of the Rue Dauphine. She was passing, wrapped in a large tartan shawl, a close black velvet cap on her head, on her arm one of those straw and willow baskets which hang upon the arms of so large a majority of the women of our excellent city, and on her feet shoes of rather equivocal neatness. Yet, with all these disadvantages, our student recognizes the slight make and the pretty eyes of his last night's partner—he had already guessed that her heart gave him all he required. His choice is made; the treaty of alliance is signed at table at the Grande Chaumière du Mont Parnasse.* There, indeed, you would not know her to be the same girl whose sandals were sweeping the crossings the other day. She is buxom, and smart, and sparkling, and curled, and pomatumed, and set off till she is charming to look at. She has on a cambric drawn bonnet, a muslin frock, white stockings, and a bright blue scarf.

The loves of the Student and the Grisette are none of those headstrong passions which make all the weeping and wailing of our modern drama: in a short time he treats her hardly better than a maid-servant, sends her on errands, and makes her get him tobacco, and brandy, and ham for supper. When he treats his friends, it is she, who, before she takes her place at table, cooks the cutlets and lays the cloth. It must be confessed, to her praise, the grisette lends herself with the best grace to all these household cares, which render her indispensable, and give her the air of a

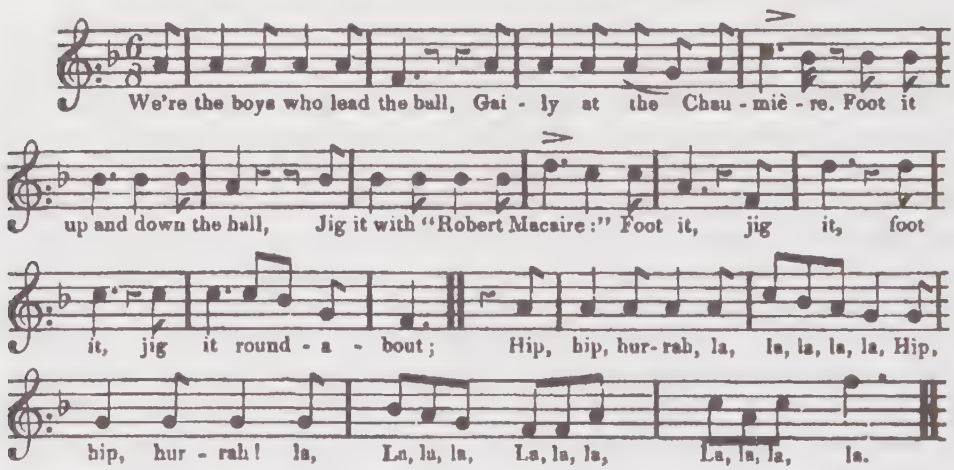
* The Vauxhall of the Parisian Grisettes.

married woman. Happy is she if nothing but the vacation breaks the link of this transient intercourse—if she can bid her temporary spouse farewell with tears, and believe his promise that he will write to her! It is but too often, that, tired of his home, the traitor only seeks to regain his independence. He picks quarrels with "his woman," he accuses her of infidelity, and by dint of a course of preparatory quarrels he gets rid of her. One of his friends succeeds him; and the poor girl is passed from hand to hand like an endorsed bill or a pawnbroker's ticket, till she falls into age and ugliness, to perish in the lowest stage of degradation.

If he has no female hand to prepare his meals at home, the Law-student may take his choice between a multitude of eating-houses, whose luxurious advertisements insure him a wholesome and copious feed for eighteen sous. Poupon, Viot, Rousseau! calumniated cooks! Like Figaro, you are worth more than your reputation. Nothing but slander could accuse your innocent assistants of converting horse's head into calves' head hashed, or of presenting Angora cats under the fallacious aspect of jugged hare. Your beef-steaks may be slightly coriacious,—your broth may be a trifle too aquatic,—your hashes may be somewhat suspicious: but not the less do you deserve the esteem and the custom of whosoever possesses a warm heart, a complaisant digestion, and eighteen sous in his pocket. Let the world's malice rage, oh, venerable sanctuaries of cheap gastronomy! As long as there is a law-school in Paris, you will continue to supply to an ever-increasing multitude your semi-basins of broth at ten centimes, and your duck and turnips at six sous the plate-full.

If we were asked by what outward signs the Law-student may be recognised, we should reply, that he does not dress in the latest fashion, but that he creates a fashion for himself. He takes care to let his hair and his beard grow, in order, as he says, not to look like a grocer; but at certain periods of the year, before the examinations, these signs of anarchy disappear. His head resembles the style of a member of the Jacobin club; his tuft and moustache that of a gallant at the court of Louis XIII. Some time ago he gloried in a white hat and a red waistcoat, à la Robespierre. Now, whether he comes from Bearn or not, he must wear the light cap and the red belt, because, he says, this costume is in character. A colossal pipe is absolutely indispensable to the Student; he is a wholesale smoker; he stifles the passers-by with volleys of the nauseous tobacco retailed by the wisdom of the French excise. His pipe bowl attests the skill of the smoker, and presents the effigy of a Turk, Henry IV., Robert Macaire, Francois I., St. Just, or some other hero. His heart beats high if he has succeeded in getting an Algerine chibouque, or an Indian hookah, to give him an air of oriental grandeur when he lies upon his sofa of red Utrecht velvet. He is king of the Latin Quarter: at the theatre, he lords it—he lords it in the tavern—he lords it in the street. His lodging-keeper respects him, the eating-house keeper courts him, the coffee-house keeper worships him: his credit is solid, for his father is well off; and he may take the upper place on the pavement, —he may claim the smiles of his fairest neighbours. A sultan without a rival, he scatters his favours at pleasure: and he recalls the better days of French gallantry, by offering bouquets to the ladies who frequent the boxes at the theatres of the Pantheon and the Luxembourg.

But the most strongly marked character of them all, is he whom the students call a "Bambocheur,"—the Tom and Jerry of the schools. His fellows may dawdle away a careless half-hour in the divan or the tea-garden, but the Bambocheur passes his life there. At ten in the morning he turns into a tavern, consumes infinite snacks of brandy and pots of beer, breakfasts copiously, smokes a considerable number of pipes, plays piquet and billiards, and in the evening, or the noon of night, sings a roystering strain in chorus :—



The Carnival is the element of the Bambocheur : he is then in his glory. For fear he should lose his watch in the confusion of the masked balls, he takes care to deposit it in the hands of an eminent pawnbroker, and the same respectable trustee consents to receive his cloak, for which he can have no use, in exchange for the jacket and periwig of a postlad. Cares to the wind! troubles be gone! Tom and Jerry have paid no immatriculation ; they will have no examinations to pass—no career to pursue—no family to please : all their faculties are wrapped up in the present, in the wine they quaff, in the nymph they whirl, in the stir and frenzy of the ball to-night.

If, in one of these mad evenings, a tranquil spectator should look down from the roof of the Pantheon Theatre, he would at first perceive nothing but a huge motley of colours, sprinkled with one canopy of dust, and clouded in a mist of stifling vapours. Then, in the midst of this chaos, he might distinguish heads, and arms, and legs, without seeing to whom they belonged, so rapid is the whirlpool in which the dense mass twists, and bounds, and boils, and circles on. From the depths of the pit he catches a strange roar, mixed with the wild dissonance of human voices, pitched in all imaginable keys, from the lowest growl to the shrillest squall. The scene is like a field of battle—like an unutterable limbo—a labyrinth of human bodies—a pandemonium of dancers ; it is a masquerade.

The outward man of the Student has told us so much of his outward habits, that we may now interrogate his inward propensities. The fine arts—literature—philosophy—and politics,—he will study them all, every thing but his law. He devours the new novels, and decides the fate of the last new play. The portrait of Madame

George Sand, hooked by a pin to his bed's head, bears witness to his enthusiastic admiration for that distinguished hermaphrodite. He follows M. de Balzac in his eccentric chase of modern manners, and adores, in Victor Hugo, the chief and leader of the modern school of poetry. What should he care for the stiff and stilted tragedies, composed, like a rule-of-three sum, by putting together a certain number of princes, princesses, and confidants? The tribute of his enthusiasm is paid wherever the drama is most exciting, and the plot most extravagant. To-night they play a new piece of his favourite author: he goes without his dinner—by two o'clock he is at the doors, he is the first at the check-taker's stall, he is sure to carry off a ticket, tho' but one remain. The play begins: they are hissing in one of the boxes.—"Turn him out; turn him out!" cries the Student, "he is an Academician!"—Again. "Turn him out! off with the Classics!" Then comes a burst of high and harmonious poetry; the house shakes with applause; the Student claps with fury, and casts a look of contempt on the wretch who is vehemently suspected of being an Academician.

It is rare that the Law-student does not play on some instrument. He takes lessons on the flageolet, the German flute, or the French horn, or at least he can crow an air on the accordeon. In spite of police regulations, he claps his bugle to his mouth at one in the morning, when he comes home from the play, to console himself for the dull milk-and-water piece they have been acting. The landlord scolds; the neighbours remove: but what does that signify to the intrepid virtuoso, who continues his loud reveillée to the cats of the neighbourhood. If his lungs are exhausted, he must sacrifice to the Muses: the cacoethes seizes him,—he must write. He addresses letters to all the magazines, and half the papers, which are never inserted; he sends dramas and farces to the managers of all the theatres on the Boulevards, which are never read. He take the MS. of a novel of the heart, (in 2 vols. 8vo.) to Lachapelle, or to H. Souverain, the cautious and discreet receivers of these remarkable compositions. The tales he composes almost invariably begin:—

"It was in a lovely morning of spring, that two men, wrapped in large cloaks, were silently descending the hill, &c." Or sometimes he rushes *in medias res*, according to the following recipe:—

"'By the mass!' exclaimed our young hero, as he emptied at a draught his goblet of Hungarian wine, 'we live, my lords, in times,' &c." His poetry is generally consumptive, languid, pulmonary, giving over, and given over by, all the world: full of I's and interjections; as, for instance:—

"I wander weary and alone
Along the world, an outcast's moan
 Breaks from my pallid lips!
All things are born to nurse my sadness!
My heart is struck with gall and madness,
 My soul is in eclipse!"

This stanza came to light in a cloud of tobacco smoke, and under the inspiration of the brandy-bottle. When he sees that glory and the publishers turn their backs upon him, the student moults into the condition of a neglected genius; and as he saunters across the Pont des Arts, he casts a look of fierce melancholy upon the

turbid stream below. Happily he may derive consolation from philosophy, for he, too, is a philosopher: no sooner has a theory been sprung, than it meets among the students with adepts, partisans, and fanatics. During the Restoration, they swore by Voltaire; now they have borrowed the semi-moral and religious tint of the present day. Some still applaud the economic theories of St. Simon, or the reveries of Fourier; whilst a greater number fulfil the precepts of the Perè Enfantin in the noisy follies of the Bal du Prado.

The political opinions of the Law-student are of that class which invariably make old and asthmatic folks say—"Ay! you are a young man, you'll live to change those notions!" or, "Those dreams will never come true: I can see you have a young head!" There are a certain number of beings persuaded that after thirty nothing remains but to wax pursy, and grow like an oyster. The Student is a flaming patriot; his room is hung with the portraits of the leaders of the Mountain. The Revolution of July was, in his eyes, a rose-water revolution—a revolution in pumps and silk stockings. If he had had his will, war should have been declared in 1830 to all the world, and the tricolor flag should have gone round the globe. He deplores the fate of Poland, and curses the Autocrat. At the time when the national subscriptions were flourishing, his name figured on the lists, accompanied with some epithets of more or less intensity, as, "A. B., a friend of liberty and of his country, the enemy of tyrants and oppression, TWO-PENCE HALFPENNY." The late lamented Society of the Rights of Man reckoned a vast number of Law-students in its ranks. They harangued the sections, announced officially that the Faubourgs of Antoine and Martin were ready to come down, slept in red nightcaps, and, when called upon, armed for rebellion. Alas! not a few of these victims of enthusiasm fell on the blood-stained pavement of St. Mary.

The deadliest animosity burns between the Law-student and the Policeman. They are foes as irreconcileable as the Capulets and the Montagues—not without reason. Who is it that catches the students at the ball in the flagrant crime of the national cachoucha?—who takes them to the station house?—who checks the spring of their airy steps?—the Policeman. But the principal motives of the Student's aversion are yet more serious. He execrates, in the person of the policeman, the agent,—the armed myrmidon of the government: and as soon as he sees him coming he throws an expression of intense disdain into his countenance, and mutters in his sleeve the contumelious name of "*Informer*."

Nevertheless, the political extravagance of the Law-student is more superficial than real: it conceals the sympathies of an honest and generous heart, and at a later age he will not abjure the opinions of his youth. As an elector, his vote is given for the opposition; as a father, he inculcates the same principles on his children; as a sentinel at the outposts of the world, his voice is always raised in favour of useful reform.

Among the students there are a good number of those hard-working fellows, whom nothing daunts, and who mingle with their law-studies the serious pursuits of history and literature. He who chooses to follow this arid path is sure of his reward, but he will be called a *Plodder*. The Plodder knows neither the pleasures nor the cares of prodigality. He makes himself scarce; his existence is a problem.

He is a young man, with no fortune, who wishes to succeed, who has the courage to read Duranton, to face, without shrinking, the voluminous precedents of Dalloz and Sirey, who places himself in an attorney's office, and after two years of assiduous labour, obtains the important post of third clerk. His fortune is secure.

There is hardly a student who does not take to plodding at least once a year, for the approach of the examinations causes a complete perturbation, a general shaking-down of the whole Latin Quartier. To work they set; to the neglected codes they run; they sit up at night; they are denied to their friends; they bury themselves with Rogron and Ducaurroy. The statutes are dissected; the Code passes into an abstract, and after six weeks' toil, the Student often is just ready—to be plucked. The victim protests against this act of injustice, and says the professors are scoundrels.

Three, four, or five years suffice for the Student to pass triumphantly through his five probations, including the thesis. You may recognize in an instant in the Salle des Pas Perdus* him who has just been called. He flaunts along in his borrowed gown; his heaving breast raises his tawny frill; he carries under his arm an immense portfolio, stuffed with papers, to simulate the absent briefs; he invites his acquaintances to come and see him in court, where they are sure to find him, and if he perceives some big-wig near him, he raises his cap half an inch from his forehead, to pursuade the profane vulgar that he is acquainted with the lion of the court.

The actual call to the bar gives rise to one subject of extreme embarrassment to the licentiate. The regulations of the honorable Society of Advocates require that the candidate for that honour should at least inhabit suitable chambers on the first or second floor, and that he should be master of a library adequately furnished with books of jurisprudence. Unhappily, the licentiate has been living in the Place Sorbonne, at the fifth story above the *entresol*, and his law library consists of Beranger's songs, Voltaire's Tales, the Contrat Social, an odd volume of one of Paul de Kock's novels, and a few more old tomes. In a fortunate hour, one of his friends, a man of business, leaves the keys of a superb set of chambers in his keeping. He gives his address at his friend's residence; and the visitor, whose duty it is to see that these conditions are complied with, is not more astonished at the splendid abode of so young a colleague than at his numerous and well-chosen library, and his desks laden with briefs and cases of every kind.

In the spouting-clubs, where the Student and junior advocates learn the art of defending the widow and the orphan, the youthful aspirant pleads with equal emphasis and erudition. He quotes the year-books and the digest, Pothier and Gaius; and crams his speech with scraps of Latin.

"Yes," he exclaims, "in the question now before us, my learned friend on the other side is *penitus extraneus*; he is urged on by the hope of gain, *certat de lucro captando*, whilst we—we, *certamus de damno vitando*." The junior advocate is fond of anticipating the arguments of the other side, and it is extraordinary if you do not detect in his speech two or three phrases pronounced in a shrill voice, and beginning —"My friends on the other side will, perhaps,"—and then, after enumerating these

* The Westminster Hall of the Parisian Bar.

imaginary objections, he throws back his sleeve, raises his arms to Heaven, and exclaims :—" Is it possible to imagine—I ask, gentlemen, whether it be possible to imagine a line of argument more entirely unsupported by the facts of the case, more contrary to the principles of law, more extravagant to the ears of the court, more—I check myself, gentlemen, lest my rising indignation should lead me to forget what is due to the audience which I have the honour of addressing."

Sunt verba et voces, prætereaque nihil.

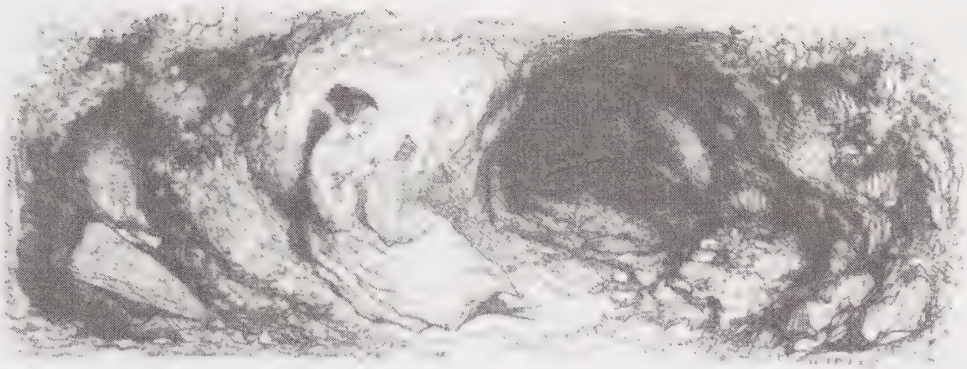
But, notwithstanding these spouting propensities, the forensic societies form the young barrister to habits of public speaking. He has the advantage of acting in his turn as judge, president, attorney-general, prosecutor, or defender; and he learns to plead for, or against, the first question which occurs—an art for which he may find an every-day application.

We have launched our Student in the world ; we have seen him shake off the dust of the schools ; and now nothing remains but to wish him a successful career, and a throng of clients, so that he may not be obliged, after long and bootless efforts, to scribble for a newspaper, or to enlist in the Hussars.





THE POLITICAL LADY.



POLITICAL LADIES.

BY COMTE HORACE DE VIEL-CASTEL.



PRE-EMINENTLY popular among the works which form our juvenile library, is "Numa Pompilius;" nor is any French writer better known to, or appreciated by, the world, than the Chevalier de Florian. It is to him and to his book the nymph Egeria, that immortal Privy Councillor of one of the first Roman Kings, is indebted for the universal reputation she enjoys; to him is due the honour of having given a proverbial signification to her name, and of having torn it, so to speak, from the ungrateful oblivion of history, by placing it as a proud symbol in the common treasury of poetical creations. Thanks to M. de Florian, that perfumed shepherd of the groves of Sceaux—Penthièvre,* we have seen Agnes Sorel and Madame de Maintenon transformed, by a sort of historical imagining, into water-nymphs, and Charles the Seventh and Louis the Fourteenth into modern Numas. But in our days—when it is pretty nearly decided that a Constitutional King may reign, but cannot govern—in our days, and in France, a royal Egeria might die of famine in her humid cave. Now, however disinterested an Egeria is, or may be, she does not attach herself to fictions, whether crowned or not. The modern Egeria will be the

* The Chevalier de Florian was a *gentilhomme d'honneur* to the Duke of Penthièvre, whose residence was at Sceaux, near Paris.

adjective feminine of a reality only. She no longer inhabits a grotto fitted up with a few shells, green moss, and a brook of clear water; nor does she *now* conceal herself from the worship of the *Many*, to luxuriate in the platonic endearments of the *One*. No; the Egeria of the nineteenth century is less impalpable: she has resolved on being a woman—nay, a woman of the world; the Egeria or Egerias of our acquaintance are born and die like ordinary mortals: they marry, have lovers, ride on horseback, go to balls, and leave the impress of their footsteps on the avenues of our walks.

The Egeria of the Chevalier de Florian would be, in the present day, a Political Lady—the good La Fontaine would call her the "fly on the coach-wheel"—and in our opinion La Fontaine would describe her correctly. We would premise, however, that the coach of the state not being exactly that which most occupies us now-a-days —each political party—each coterie, indeed, having its own especial "coach,"—we are compelled to recognize the existence of as many "flies" as we count "coaches" in France.

Two great classes here present themselves to our notice,—the Ministerial "Fly," and the "Fly" of the Opposition: they belong, nevertheless, to the same species, spring from the same moral principle, and have so much in common, that you can distinguish them only by the difference of their colour.

The Political Lady is seldom a very young woman; her age ceases to be avowed; it cannot even be guessed at, and up to the day of her death she has the ability to maintain herself in this doubtful position, which leaves the men who surround her suspended between respect, and that impertinent gallantry which some women condescend to place in the list of "Attentions." But to support this pretension to the title of "Political Lady"—to see her drawing-room transformed, either into a kind of Cabinet Council or Club,—two conditions are essential, and these are as the keystone to all the other requisites—the Political Lady, whether Ministerial or Oppositionist, must move in the first circles, and possess a large fortune. Destitute of these essentials, the Political Lady will obtain but slight consideration—nay, will be esteemed by many people only a mere bustling busy-body. If she is not a widow,—widowhood being an immense advantage,—she should be furnished with one of those easy and discreet husbands who occupy a sort of "Steward-of-the-household" position about their wives; functionaries of subaltern rank—an *existence* rather than a *person*—a something *understood*, but scarcely *expressed*—a kind of nonentity. On all state occasions,—on New Year's day,—this shadow of a substance will receive the cards of his wife's political friends, but he will know none of them;—he devotes himself to the domestic affairs of the establishment; but the final arrangement, even of these, is not with him. He is permitted, perhaps, to conduct his daughter to the public walks, but in no way does he influence her education. In a word, this husband is nothing more than a name, an item in the social compact, to which the sign-manual of the wife gives its only authenticity.

As Madame de Regnacourt (the Egeria of Ministers), and Madame de Divindroit (the tutelary goddess of Opposition,) have both a reasonable number of lovers, it will be understood that the whole sisterhood of Political Ladies is liable to this little peculiarity.

Literature has few charms for the Political Lady. She does not indulge in light reading, and no romance obtains the *entrée* of her drawing-room or boudoir; but on her tables, sofas, chairs, and chimney-pieces, the Journals muster in strong force, and assume attitudes of conscious dignity; while political pamphlets, documents of diplomacy, and even the opinions of some of the Deputies, printed separately on fine "hot-pressed," are the ornaments and darlings of her library. The Marchioness of ———, one of the most conspicuous Political Ladies of our era, is even said to read regularly every year those immense folios which comprise the various chapters of the Budget. On certain days the Political Ladies crowd eagerly to the diplomatic box of the Chamber of Deputies;—they murmur approval or dissent—they applaud in under-tones,—and during the pauses which occasionally take place, they maintain warm discussions with those placed immediately behind them.

Some, indeed, of still higher pretensions, affect the language of a learned Incomprehensibility, a metaphysical Profundity, unintelligible to their hearers, and very specially so, to—themselves. These fall asleep at night over the lectures of Cousin, and walk in the Bois de Boulogne with Guizot's Philosophy of History in their hands. The Countess of ———, a political blue-stocking of the highest distinction, said lately to one of our most brilliant authors of Apocryphal Memoirs,—"I love Guizot and Cousin with nearly equal affection; or rather, the two complete in me a psychological and instinctive sympathy! The duality of these great men becomes confounded in a complex unity, and enables me to comprehend the Infinite, of which Guizot has all the depth, while Cousin finely illustrates its extent!"—"Might you not rather say," replied the writer of Memoirs, "and that without detracting in the least from their resemblance to the Infinite, that they are both equally inexplicable?"

The Political Lady whose thoughts are expressed in metaphysical terms, is one of those who have been unhappy creatures, sharply tried and shaken by the storm of the passions, and who has survived herself—because still demanding the stimulus of violent sensations at an age when they are unsuited to her constitution. Politics are to her a kind of love-affair: she throws on them the now paled reflex of her youthful warmth; she is all enthusiasm; she hates, she adores, this or that political personage—this or that cause; thus pursuing unconsciously a secret instinct, which is not always governed by reason, and is seldom accompanied by constancy. This woman is the poetically Political Lady: the seriously Political Lady, on the contrary, insists much on the free use of her reason—and boasts that her sympathies are fixed and constant. Politics are to her nothing more than the continuation of her last lover: to some, as to those old card-players, who turn pale with the dying tapers around a green-baize, they are *altogether* a last lover, and the dearest, it may be, of all.

I have known two remarkable examples of the "Political Lady;"—the first summed up in one sole nature the whole galaxy of Ministerial Egerias; the second offered to my investigation the Egerias in Opposition. These two divinities, women of rank, rich, elegant, and reputed clever, exerted, each in the circle of her opinions, a certain influence,—a kind of sovereignty, political and moral. The first, the Countess of Regnacourt, had been what is commonly called "very gay"—that is to say, she had had many admirers, and consequently little constancy; but, by a singular

caprice of fate, or rather by a wonderful foresight of the future, she had had the art, or the good fortune, to select her slaves from a certain set, among whom, Power, having once showered his favours, had established himself fixedly, choosing from its numbers his most indulged favourites. By degrees, then, the list of Madame de Regnacourt's lovers became a list of Ministers, Councillors of State, Deputies, Peers, and Ambassadors: her freedmen governed France, as in former times the freedmen of the Roman Emperors governed the world; yet the fetters of these manumitted slaves were not so utterly broken, but that one end of the chain still connected them with their former sovereign, and brought them continually within the sphere of her influence, not now, perhaps, cringing and trembling as formerly, but all disposed to suffer, as the price of certain privileges, a species of control, of which they did not always fully appreciate either the importance or the extent. Madame de Regnacourt held in her honourable toils two or three of these "freedmen" in every Ministerial combination, and for each of these combinations she had always ready Ambassadors trained to the new system, whom she was to raise to the throne of Power. Madame de Regnacourt foresaw, with marvellous sagacity, all changes of ministry,—every variation of tactics among foreign alliances; and then, with a promptitude and cleverness no less wonderful than her sagacity, she would change in a few days all the human furniture of her reception-rooms—to the Doctrinaires succeeded the Tiers-partistes, to the Tiers-partistes the Dynastics,—and all these metamorphoses were effected without difficulty, resentment, or surprise. People who feared to travel the political road without securing good weather for the journey, first consulted the aspect of Madame de Regnacourt's drawing-room; and they seldom found the barometer mislead them.

I never knew the husband of Madame de Regnacourt; he was not a recognized part of her establishment: all I can say of him is, that he held, I know not what appointment, in, I can't tell which portion of the globe. No one ever named the Count de Regnacourt to his wife, nor did she ever mention him to a human being, except perhaps to myself, who was her confidant, because I was the only one of all the men she received, who had never thought of paying court to her. "Monsieur de Regnacourt," said she to me one evening, "is a very good man, mild and easy to live with, but he likes a quiet life; his ideas, though rational and just, are but slightly developed; he would die with fatigue and disgust if exposed to the bustle of politics.—"Confess, madam," said I, "that M. de R. is the very pearl of husbands."—"Why will you have me confess that?" asked she, looking at me fixedly.—"Why? Oh, merely because he is a desirable convenience."—"Nay, you jest at every thing," returned Madame de Regnacourt; "but I assure you very seriously, that Monsieur de Regnacourt has many excellent qualities."—"I know that he possesses *one*, Madam—he is always absent." And I really believe, that of all the qualities accorded to M. de Regnacourt, whether by Nature or Art, the most valuable in the eyes of his wife was the excellent one of never being in the way: it is possible that a husband's presence may throw his wife into the shade: one hates to see the vulgar better half of the goddess one has placed on a pedestal; and the Political Lady, the Egeria of the 19th century, is of the number of those divinities who need all the illusions with which they surround

themselves, and with which we surround them. Madame de Regnacourt received few ladies, and rarely paid visits; her doors were open in the evening to none but to certain initiated; sometimes, indeed, her porter replied with the most imperturbable coolness, even to habitual visitors, "Madame is not at home!" though a whole line of carriages drawn up in the court of her hotel, gave the lie direct to his assertion. The secret of this was, that there was then holding at Madame de Regnacourt's one of those secret councils of Ministers, anxious for a clear understanding among themselves on some important measure, apart from the presence of a too powerful colleague. Certain wicked wits, enemies of Madame de Regnacourt, called her saloons the ministerial *Vendanges de Bourgogne*.* She rarely appeared at court on public reception days, but three or four times a year the journals announced, with a mysterious importance, that the King had received her at a private interview. Did an event, fortunate or otherwise, occur in her family, an officer of the palace was dispatched to her, charged by an August Benevolence with the transmission of condolence, or of earnest congratulation: in short, Madame de Regnacourt was a silent and stealthy power—a sort of nameless influence—attached to the order of things for the time being, but stronger than all powers, independent of the different factions that divide them,—the Egeria of every minister, proceeding with each while he remained triumphant, but surviving them all.

It seldom happened that Madame de Regnacourt accorded her protection to those who sought it: she preferred to select her creatures for herself, and to elevate them rapidly towards the position for which she designed them. Foreign embassies, and the council of state, were peopled with her favourites, but especially the embassies. These owed to her their most youthful and most active secretaries; through these she received the earliest intelligence from all the countries of the world, for she had the art of rendering them all honourably indiscreet, without permitting them to perceive their indiscretion, so that none had to blush for his errors, or to feel any remorse on their account. Each of her *protégés* had compromised himself by a declaration of attachment, which she had possessed the power to wring from all; the number of the called was considerable, that of the chosen remains a secret.

If it happened that Madame de Regnacourt was present at some important debate in the Chamber of Deputies, the most influential orators approached to pay their respects to her during the intervals of the sitting; and the next day, the political journals announced to France and the world, that Madame de Regnacourt was observed in the gallery of the house.

To create for herself, thus, a sort of political royalty,—an existence apart, which caused her to be considered a kind of fourth power in the state, the Countess de Regnacourt had been compelled to renounce almost all the usual enjoyments of social life; she had been obliged to sequestrate herself, to seal herself up in a cold and dignified importance, repulsive to friendship and the softer affections: women disliked, and men feared her; but as the men treated her with deference, and sought to be noticed by her, the mass of people who fill the saloons of Paris considered her a very superior woman. To ministers, she was a sort of living protocol, a walking

* Name of a French restaurant, where wedding parties are held.

tradition, a depository of secret archives, a link that chained the past to the present, and connected both with the future.

When I first saw the Countess de Regnacourt, she appeared to me impertinent enough, dry, formal, inflated with her own importance, and having less talent than pretence. Her conversation, to which I listened attentively, seemed to me a faint echo of those that must have taken place in her presence—a summing-up of her newspaper readings of the morning: in a word, she did not please me. When I knew her better, I discovered in her more talent, less impertinence, and less formality: the scrutiny into her character afforded me a new amusement every day; and when I wished to form a definite judgment with regard to her, I arrived at the conclusion that in this transubstantialized woman was no longer to be found, either the heart, virtues, or other qualities of woman, but neither was there the energy, force of volition, character, or potency of man; whence it resulted, that the modern Egeria, worn out as a woman, incomplete in every way as a man, without heart, without reality, a species of political gnome, a martyr to her presumption, found an admirable prototype, as I thought, in that dog of the good La Fontaine which drops the prey he holds, to run after its shadow in the river. This conclusion was not just: one of my old friends, a keener observer, and a more profound judge than I am, bade me correct it. "Madame de Regnacourt," said he to me, "has first of all well eaten up her prey—ay, even to the last bone: nay, during her youth, far from being satisfied with what belonged to herself, she very frequently devoured the prey of others. Now-a-days, she is trying to change into realities all the shadows she can lay hold of, and she does not succeed badly either: she is no longer beautiful, yet she has still lovers; her husband is neither a minister nor an ambassador, yet she is surrounded by an assiduous court of political potentates; she is, then, at the very least, an extremely clever woman." A young scape-grace, who heard the wise explanation of my old friend, remarked, as he pirouetted from our presence, "Madame de Regnacourt! Oh, she is the Mother Stork of every government; examine carefully, and you will find all our statesmen nestled warmly under her wings."

The Egeria of Opposition—the Marchioness of Divindroit,—unlike Madame de Regnacourt, had, to my mind, the air and character of a woman still young;—lively and joyous, yet sentimental and romantic—for she had built up and demolished full many a romance. She had hosts of friends; nothing about her repelled you, or inspired fear; she was fond of change, of pleasure, but her admirers found that their hold upon her favours was slight indeed: she changed them with as much apparent unconcern as she did her gloves. It was antecedent to the Revolution of 1830 that Madame de Divindroit transformed herself into a Political Lady; the royalty of the elder branch had previously possessed all her sympathies, and war to the knife had been declared by her against the pretensions of the younger branch. Madame de Divindroit divided her time pretty equally between the pleasures of Paris and a magnificent domain that she possessed on the borders of Picardy and Artois. At Paris Madame de Divindroit received all the political leaders in whose creed she placed her faith: these were assembled on certain days at dinners which she affirmed the police watched with a troubled and vigilant eye; she dismissed the

servants at dessert,and sought to convert her hopes into the realities she imagined to be close at hand; she spoke of the form of government that ought to be adopted when her anticipations should be fulfilled; then launched forth into high-flown political disquisitions, and talked of "European interests," for which she invented a new balance: these disquisitions she animated by her sole word,—she had eloquence enough for the whole party. To her most intimate friends she displayed dear letters—precious locks of hair!! "darling, inestimable documents!!!" She had shares in the loans of Don Carlos and Don Miguel, and religiously celebrated all the fêtes which the calendar of the new royalty had not preserved. When the King of the French put on mourning she wore rose colour, but appeared in mourning for all those which the new court of France chose to neglect. In her drawing-room at Paris were collected all the journals and pamphlets most vehemently opposed to the established order of things; she received with open arms its bitterest enemies, those more especially who had been imprisoned for biting polemics, and those who refused to participate in the honours of the National Guard. Busts of the proscribed were the ornaments of her chimney-piece, and in a little purse of green silk and silver she kept carefully certain coins which bore a seditious impress.

Such is the part played by, such is the conduct of, the "opposing" Egeria. During her stay in Paris she has political lovers, whose modes of thought she watches narrowly; concerning herself with their religious affairs; sending them to mass and sermon with an edifying strictness. It is by her influence that criminals are to become regenerate.

In the summer, Madame de Divindroit leaves Paris to fix herself for six months at her seat. There, mistress and sovereign, she worries the mayor of her commune, torments the prefect of her department, puts clogs on the wheels of the electoral car, and is worshipped by the peasantry, whose misery she solaces, and whom she teaches to distrust the Government. Her flower-garden is filled with *lilies**; she hears mass in the chapel of her mansion, and sings herself, with a resounding voice, a *Domine salvum*, that would make the police inspector of her arrondissement to shake in his shoes, could the sound of it but reach him. She gives two feasts a year to the peasantry around her domain—the one on St. Henry's † day, the other on that of St. Louis: on those days the neighbouring gentlemen are invited to dinner, and Heaven only knows under what terrible toasts to legitimacy the wine disappears—what sounds of sedition wake the echoes of the dining-room.

The Marchioness de Divindroit has been involved in two conspiracies: for one she embroidered a stand of colours, for the other she made cockades from the silk of her dresses;—she goes constantly from Paris to her seat, and from her seat to Paris, without passports, that she may not travel under the protection of Louis Philippe.

Her husband, the Marquis of Divindroit, is a good honest man, with little wit, but gentle and accommodating—always kneeling in admiration before his wife, but pluming himself proudly on his independence, and the inflexibility of his political opinions. He sees, he hears, only through the organs of his lady, and believes only

* Emblems of the old dynasty.

† Name of the Duc de Bordeaux.

what she believes. The Marchioness of Divindroit has some consideration for him—she will have him, at all hazards, play a conspicuous part; and on the principle of the old game, placed behind him, passes her arms under his—which he conceals; speaking words and making gestures of which he seems the originator, and bears all the responsibility. Twice he has been incarcerated for a *too* factious opposition; but so far is he from complaining of this, that she devised means to make him grateful for those days of imprisonment. Madame de Divindroit is extremely well received, whether at Paris or in the country, by the "purest" of her political faith: she is a Political Lady in high estimation: her parties are well attended; the importance she attributes to herself and her consistency is looked upon as a matter which seems indispensable to her neighbours, as incontrovertible, because she has resolutely persevered in closing her gates against all the "Vicars of Bray" who have succeeded each other within the last ten years.

Such are two examples of Political Ladies with whom *I* have met. They have fully convinced me that the Deity did not create Woman for so rude a labour as that of Politics; more than ever do I feel certain that the woman who will devote her energies to a study fit only for men loses all her distinctive qualities—all her graces—all her feminine beauties,—without gaining aught to compensate her for so many losses. Women have few roads to distinction: rarely does there appear an inspired Joan of Arc to wield the sword of battle, nor are the destinies of empires often confided to a heartless Elizabeth, or a sanguinary Catherine. I would not impose on all women the epitaph of the Roman matron—"*Domum mansit, lanam fecit;*" but I would much rather read on the funeral stone of each—"She died of too much dancing"*—than meet with many tombs like that of the Mistress of Monaldeschi.

* Elle aimait trop le bal; c'est ce qui l'a tuée.—Victor Hugo.





THE LITERARY ADVENTURER.



THE LITERARY ADVENTURER.

BY ALBÉRIC SECOND.



LEAVING others to debate upon, or doubt the assertion, that Nature designed to limit the number of human beings to the extent of the means she provided for them, there can be no question that the world is just at present greatly over-populated. It has always appeared to us, that, however desirable it might be to feed the "little ones" of the sparrow, it was still more so to sustain the little ones of the human race; and as we believe that Nature could never have designed an incomplete work, it is our firm conviction, that when the world was formed, a certain fixed population was assigned to it, which man, had he reflected, or considered his own interests, would never have gone beyond. Reader, do you doubt this? Peruse history; look into tradition;—what do you learn from them? What but that mortals were greatly blessed at the outset of existence,—enjoyed, without effort, all the luxuries of life, walked through their appointed paths, as if treading only on banks of flowers—with no regrets for the past, no cares for the present, and no anxieties for the future! It is true that now and then there chanced some disagreeable episodes to disturb the harmony of this picture; but who, while delighting in the glory of a sunny morning of spring, ever thought of weeping because astronomers had said there were spots on the disc of the luminary?

Alas! as time crept on, mankind increased and spread rapidly, gathering, as it progressed, like an overgrown snowball; the flowery turf became deformed by rugged

and ungraceful footpaths; each man began to struggle for himself, and laboured to push aside his neighbour. "Go out of that, and let me get in," became a fashionable phrase,—and selfishness at length grew to be a sort of vital necessity—an universal law! How could it have been otherwise, when the smallest vacant spot was occupied by a host of rivals; when every thing that was to be had was furiously battled for—from the portfolio of a state-minister to the seven-feet-square shop of the snuff-seller?—when there were twenty times more lawyers than suits to be lost, more painters than portraits to be taken, more soldiers than victories to gain, and more doctors than patients to kill?

Under the reign of the Emperor, when it was resolved, that to pass one's life in exposing one's self to death, was to gain a social position, cannon-balls made very serviceable vacancies in the corps of youthful aspirants,—made them, too, without selection or arrangement; but now that the war-mania is no longer the order of the day, there remain for our youths but two paths to distinction—medicine and the bar.

Now, since, to succeed in these, one must inevitably traverse roads not always blooming with roses; since, besides, they both overflow already with an incredible number of poor wretches whom one sees wrangling for clients and patients, with all the eagerness of an appetite sharpened by long fasting, it follows, that hundreds of pens, nibbed to take notes from the lectures of Monsieur Orfila*, are used for rhyming elegies, and that many a note-book prepared for the digest of Monsieur Ducaurroy's† lessons, has served eventually to receive sketches of a plan for a vaudeville, or to put down the scenes of a melodrama. The assertion, "Poeta nascitur, non fit," is one of those errors, that by dint of frequent repetition have acquired the authority of absolute truths. No, we are *not* born poets. Did you ever hear that De Lamartine made verses in his swathing-clothes—or that Chateaubriand saluted the coming of his first tooth with any other melodies than screaming and tears? It is certain, that among the three thousand young men whom the provinces send yearly to Paris, that Minotaur of stone, you could scarcely find ten who visit it with the purpose of becoming authors. The great mass come under pretence of studying law or medicine; and it is not until they have got well scratched by the thorns of these two sciences, and have spent the money destined for their college fees, that some fine morning, imagining themselves subjected to the secret influence of Heaven, they mount the pen, which is to be the courser bearing them to glory and fortune:—or embark in the inkstand, whose little black waves have suddenly become transformed into the golden waters of Pactolus.

The advent of *one* Literary Adventurer being, with a few slight and unimportant variations, that of all Literary Adventurers, we will describe the progress of Eugène Preval, an Adventurer of our existing epoch. *Ab uno disce omnes.*

Towards the end of the year 1831, Eugène Preval, with a full heart and an empty purse, mounted the Diligence, and bade adieu, for the first time in his life, to his family and native town of Chateau-Chinon. His father sent him to Paris to study law and refine his manners, with an allowance of one hundred francs a

* Celebrated Professor of Medicine. † Celebrated Professor of Civil Law.

month—the said one hundred francs to supply him with food, lodging, washing, candles, fire, college-expenses, dress, and pocket-money. Three weeks after his arrival, Eugène had spent the revenue of three months, and had conceived an invincible hatred to every civil code under the sun. One night he was amusing himself at the theatre of the *Gymnase*, where they were playing three pieces of Monsieur Scribe's. Chance had given him for neighbours two talkative gentlemen, and he had no better employment than that of listening to their conversation, which might be summed up as follows :—" What do you suppose Scribe receives for such little things as those that have just been represented."—" Oh! he does not gain less than from five to six hundred thousand francs a year."—" Upon my word! those scribbling fellows! I thought they all died of hunger, or at least in the workhouse."—" What a notion! Why, the cousin of the brother-in-law's uncle of my porter's godfather is the valet of a journalist, and he never receives his wages but in jewels and fine gold."—" Well done! But what do you say?—Suppose I take my third boy from the druggist to whom I have apprenticed him?—suppose I make him a man of letters?—though he should but get one hundred thousand francs at the first, it would not be a bad beginning; let's consider of it." Returned home, our hero made a bonfire of his classical books, and exclaimed, as he scornfully glanced around his garret,—" And I too will be a man of letters!"

He awoke the next day a " Literary Adventurer "—that is, he employed his morning in blackening several sheets of innocent paper, and his afternoon in searching through the Paris Directory for the whereabouts of all the Parisian Journals. The day after, he entered on that path of illusions and disgusts, to succeed in which demands not only talent, but courage, address, cunning, flexibility, and diplomacy,—a painful road, that too often terminates in wretchedness—even when it does not lead to suicide!

Eugène Preval next day proceeded to offer his " Article" to the *Revue des deux Mondes*, which it declined on the ground that it was immoral; then to the *Revue de Paris*, which could not accept it—" for it was embued with an ultra-puritanism worthy of the late pious Berquin himself." The *Siècle* found it too long, and the *Courrier Français* too short. The *National* considered that the ideas of Eugène did not square with its line of politics; and the *Presse* declared his style inflammatory to a degree, and fit only for the columns of some rabid promoter of anarchy! As to the minor papers, they were the servile imitators of their more eminent brethren: some replying that the piece was too tame, others that it was too cutting;—these declared the ideas to be all of the most wearisome stupidity, and those that they were marked by the wildest extravagance.

Two months passed thus,—Eugène walking not less than from three to four leagues daily through the streets of Paris, going from the Quartier St. Jacques to the Chaussée d'Antin, and from the Faubourg St. Germain to the Faubourg St. Honoré, braving the cold, the rain, the mud, and enduring, without a frown, the often rude rebuffs of editors, and the impertinence of porters and reporters—a mischievous tribe, ever ready to molest the applicant who bears with him no authority to enforce their respect. At last, however, and in spite of the solidity with which his illusions and his boots were endowed, both—thanks to the rude shocks they had

had to suffer in the course of their career—began very sensibly to wear out. Eugène, far from being allured by the literary first-fruits that had fallen to his lot, began to ask himself, if it would not be more profitable to study the law, and then withdraw to some provincial town, where he might defend the widow and fatherless at the rate of three shillings a head. But one day, as he was going up the street of the Sorbonne with a melancholy step, his attention was suddenly arrested by the sight of a colossal placard couched in these terms,—"The *Cherubin*, a Literary Journal, appearing every Thursday, &c., price 24 francs the year—office, Rue Guénégaud."

"*The Cherubin!*" cried our aspirant—hope reviving in his heart—"*The Cherubin!* a new journal! the only one that has not refused me. Let me try this one more at all events, before cutting my wings." He hastened to his rooms, examined the secret depositories of his desk, and discovered—Oh! unutterable delight!—that two crown pieces still remained in his possession: it was more than he needed at the moment, and dressing in his best, he set off at once to the Rue Guénégaud.

The *Cherubin* was a small insignificant publication, the only distinctions of which were its being printed on rose-coloured paper, and never having required the services of a cashier. There is most probably no one who remembers the existence of this *estimable* journal, unless, perhaps, its unlucky printers, with whom, doubtless, it is still in arrear. The said *Cherubin* flourished at No. 23, in the Rue Guénégaud, an old house, of a cold, sad, poverty-stricken aspect; and that which on the placard had been solemnly baptized by the pompous style of "Office," consisted of a single room, furnished with a circular bench, from which the stuffing had pretty nearly disappeared. At the end of this office was a closed recess, adorned by a flock-bed, on which slept in turn such of the editors as were not on satisfactory terms with their landlords. When Eugène arrived at the *Cherubin*, the whole editorial body seemed to have met by appointment at the office: it was crammed by some dozen and a half of young men, who were on the eve of revolutionizing the literary world, and of extinguishing at once all contemporary luminaries. Eugène remained some moments without daring to turn the handle of the door, so impressed was he with the idea of the majestic and imposing appearance they were about to present. At length, and by a convulsive movement, he entered the sanctuary, but his eye-sight was at once dazzled and his brain confused. Talking all together, the literary strength of the *Cherubin* was stamping on the floor, for the purpose of warming,—not the discussion, which was hot enough,—but its feet, which the absence of fire in the middle of January had rendered absolutely necessary. A thunderbolt falling suddenly from a pure blue sky on the Rue Guénégaud, would not have produced greater astonishment than did the visit of Eugène Preval;—for he did not enter Article in hand, as you may suppose;—no—he came the bearer of his six francs, which he laid with a noble air on the table, uttering these words, so eloquent in their simplicity—"Gentlemen! I am come to subscribe!" He had scarcely turned his back, when the whole assembly rose as one man, and hurried instantly to convert his six francs into chestnuts and white wine, which they eagerly swallowed to the health of the subscribing world at large.

Now our hero profoundly reasoned thus with himself—"It is impossible that the *Cherubin* can refuse the contributions of its only subscriber;"—and accordingly, when, a week after, he brought his paper, it was received with absolute enthusiasm. From that day Eugène was admitted to the honour of beating the floor with his heels, and demolishing all and sundry matters in the office of the *Cherubin*—an honour which he enjoyed daily for a period of fourteen hours. We must, however, explain, that during the three months the *Cherubin* survived after its first subscription, Eugène had no opportunity of seeing even the ghost of a chestnut or the slenderest bottle of wine.

There is one fact worthy of record, which proves how commonly things that promise marvels at the outset terminate in a very lamentable manner. Without referring here to the 1500 tragedies all hailed with plaudits at the Théâtre Français, and which are all none the less condemned to eternal oblivion, we will instance the "Article" of Eugène:—can you guess at what period it was ushered before the world? Exactly on the day when the *Cherubin* bade that world an eternal adieu! It is, however, better late than never; and our Adventurer, who had not closed an eye all night, must still be ranked with the number of the virtuous—for he joyed to see the sun rise.

At length, then, he was a man of letters. Like others, he had at last his work "imprinted;" but, what he had more than others, was a myriad of faults scattered through his whole work, the inevitable result of his inexperience in the matter of typographical correction; witness a passage wherein he had meant to celebrate the devotedness of women,—but to which a very opposite meaning was given by the omission of a single letter. Apart from this little mischief, Eugène was the happiest of men;—he carried thirty copies of the *Cherubin* to the post—there was one for each of the authorities, civil or administrative, of Chateau-Chinon: then he entered all the coffee-houses he knew, all the reading-rooms he could find, asking every where for the *Cherubin*, and not resigning it till he had slowly read over his "Article;" at night, before going to bed, he wrote several letters to himself, with the following address—"To Monsieur Eugène Preval, Journalist and Man of Letters," in order to fix his identity well in the eyes and memory of his porter.

The *Cherubin* dead, its contributors felt an immense void in their human existence;—some deplored exceedingly having no longer at their disposal that convenient rostrum, wherein they installed themselves at their ease, to harangue the crowd, which did not give itself the trouble of listening: what others regretted still more, was the loss of a shelter and flock bed, on which they might at least sometimes depend. In short, it was unanimously resolved that a new journal should be founded; and to give solidity to its existence, it was further decreed, that the property of the said journal should be created in shares: it was then that arose the *Revue de France*, supported by a society of contributing-shareholders, each engaging to pay a monthly proportion of fifteen, ten, or five francs, according to the extent of his pecuniary means; those who paid fifteen francs had the right of inserting two or three times as many papers as those who paid ten or five. It was enjoined on all the proprietors, under pain of a solemn exclusion, to demand in every public place, and that with all possible uproar, the *Revue de France*, and if by any chance some villain of a waiter

should reply—"don't know it"—the said proprietor was to turn out immediately, taking nothing but a glass of water (without sugar), and a tooth-pick—in short, consuming nothing for which he would have to pay.

Eugène, as a five-franc shareholder, joined the project, that was to be, according to the prospectus, a Literary Pyramid—that was nothing less than a twin-sister of the *Cherubin*, and that rapidly shared the same fate.

Encouraged by two successes of such excellent augury, our hero proceeded without delay to the compilation of various anonymous papers; and having heard that all men of letters in tolerable credit were more or less welcome in the reception-room of some celebrated actress, he bethought himself of making a choice, and wrote thirteen impassioned letters to the fascinating Frétillon, of the *Palais Royal*, with entreaties for instant reply: but the actress gave no reply whatever, and we do not know what would have become of our aspirant if, at the same time, and by way of consolation, one of the journals of which he was an assiduous, but ill-paid contributor, had not invited him all at once to enter the seventh heaven.

From the day of his first embarkation in Literature, Eugène had felt himself devoured by an eager longing that, like the robe of the Centaur, was ever more closely involving him in its burning folds:—he would have given ten years of his life, he declared, to have the *entrée* to the green-room of a theatre: whenever he passed the door of one he gazed with longing eyes at the special entrance of the privileged and of the performers, murmuring sadly to himself—"*open, Sesame.*" Now the journal to which we have above referred, bestowed upon him one fine morning a free admission to the *Folies Dramatiques*, appointing him to render an account of its first representations. Eugène was then living in the Rue des Mathurins St. Jacques, at the distance of a good league from the Boulevart of the Temple—the site of the theatre; but this did not prevent him from being at his post during forty consecutive nights. They were playing at that time, I know not what wild melodrama—Eugène learnt it by heart, and was not long in becoming an accomplished critic in his appreciation of the company. Every paper overflowed with conscientious remonstrances—addressed to Mademoiselle Alphonsine, and recommending her to take pattern by Mademoiselle Anastasie—and to Monsieur Auguste, entreating him to be less servile in his imitation of Monsieur Adolphe.

One evening he was admitted, by special favour, behind the scenes; he was beside himself for joy—his cheeks glowed, his eyes sparkled, his heart beat almost through his waistcoat, not with fear, but with a sacred emotion; one might have compared him to a young lieutenant in his first battle. He went dreaming of unbounded delights; the said delights consisted in receiving a cloud on his head that crushed his hat—a cabin fell about his legs and tore them cruelly,—an oily moon set full on his back,—to say nothing of the blows of the scene-shifter, and the kicks of the firemen in waiting. At the instant of leaving this place of bliss, he lost his footing, and plunged headlong into the "pit of the wicked," represented by that same trap-door by which the villain of the piece had a moment before been swallowed up. That night Eugène lost an illusion, and found a sprain which confined him to his room for a fortnight;—he employed this period in fabricating a vaudeville, such as, according to the manager, we shall never see again. The introduction to the first act,

among other parts, was written with prodigious force; let the following passage exemplify—"The theatre represents a forest; on the left is a tree." The managers of Paris had all, without exception, the cruelty to deprive the city of this remarkable work,—he of the Théâtre Français and all, to which last it was addressed under the pseudonymic of "Comedy." The recipe on these occasions is very simple. You wish to make a waistcoat out of your coat,—then you cut off the skirts: in like manner, Eugène pulled down the ill-built and loosely-rhymed couplets of his vaudeville, and converted it into a comedy. This check made our hero bid adieu to the theatre, and return to the journalizing path, where new and brilliant successes awaited him. It was now that he felt the necessity of surrounding his name with a halo of some kind or other; and to this end wrote an anonymous letter to the editor of the *Paris Directory*, complaining loudly of the carelessness and ignorance that had presided at the compilation of the said Directory; and to prove the justice of his assertion, he cited the incredible omission therein made of the name of a distinguished Monsieur Eugène Preval, living at Paris, in the Rue Monsieur-le-Prince, No. 78, and at the house of a wine-merchant!

At this same period, Eugène desired to have some visiting-cards engraved. Making known to a friend the embarrassment he experienced at having no distinctive epithet to tag to his name—adding, besides, that he was not ambitious, but would be content with the merest nonsense of a thing, were it even the title of Chevalier of the Legion of Honour—his friend advised him to get himself elected member of the Historical Institute; and by means of six five-franc pieces, Eugène was elected accordingly. From this moment he had the right of *absenting* himself from its monthly meetings to discuss Literature and Geography; charming assemblies, nevertheless, they are,—where some three dozen of people who have nothing else to do, meet with the sole aim of telling each other little silly apologues, and reciting dear innocent fables.

Not content with these titles to the admiration of his contemporaries, Eugène, whom men began to inebriate with their vapoury incense, resolved one morning to make himself the satellite of some declared luminary. Finding Parnassus too steep for his little legs, and glory a fruit too elevated for his little arms, he adopted the resolution of hooking himself on to some person of celebrity, whose limbs were sufficiently vigorous and long to attain the one and gather the other. His choice having been determined, he wrote the following letter, bearing the impress of all the frankness and facility of which he felt himself capable:—

"Sir—The reading of your charming works has long inspired me with the wish to express to you personally all the admiration I feel for you. Accept the assurance, &c. Eugene Preval, Man of Letters."

Two days after, he received a reply, conceived thus—

"Come—I am entirely yours. You shall press the hand of a comrade, who offers you his friendship and excellent cigars.

"To Monsieur Eugène Preval, Man of Letters."

One observation we make by the way: most of our great men smoke. Is it, therefore, that they so often emit smoke for the benefit of their readers and publishers?

Four years have now passed since these things and many more such occurred. The wisdom of the ancients has declared, that by dint of hammering one becomes a good smith;—you will not then be surprised if I tell you, that our aspirant, after having passed successively from journals paying badly to journals paying better, and from journals paying better to journals paying well, has at length, like his neighbours, achieved something approaching to distinction. There are few Parisian printing-offices unacquainted with his hand-writing. It is not, therefore, impossible, that the Publisher of the *Pictures of the French drawn by Themselves* may ask him to write a sketch—nor is it unlikely that Dantan will hasten to give him a niche in his *Eccentric Pantheon*.





THE MONTHLY NURSE.



THE MONTHLY NURSE.

BY MADAME DE BAWR.



IN Paris there exists, and flourishes, a very lucrative trade for women, which, though in some respects fatiguing, is admirably suited to the habits of the idle: for idleness is not exactly the result of a wish to do nothing, but arises rather from a dislike to uniform and constantly recurring labour. Many an idle man would readily consent to gain his bread by running about Paris, from seven in the morning till five at night, who could never subject himself to the restraint of holding a pen for three hours consecutively in a counting-house: the difficulty to him, and that which he finds most repulsive to his nature, is the steady pursuit of a fixed and settled occupation. Witness, for example, those men, who, holding no place in any class of society, have taken up the "profession" of rope-dancers, street-jugglers, and so forth;—"professions," which, well or ill, they exercise in the open air, exposed to all the hardships of the seasons, and often at the peril of their lives, when, with infinitely less actual exertion, they might become decent and respectable workmen. To deceive idleness, it suffices that you give variety to the labour you impose. The trade to which I am about to refer, secures, to those who select it, a life the most varied that can well be imagined.

Every month, and sometimes more frequently, Madame Jacquemart changes her dwelling and her bed (when circumstances permit her to sleep in a bed): makes acquaintance with new faces, and finds herself obliged to study new characters, with

whom she must sympathise, if she desire to secure herself good treatment in the several houses she inhabits? Fortunately, a long exercise of her profession has taught her to appreciate, at the first glance, all who possess any importance in the dwelling she has just entered for the first time: among the servants, as among the masters, she sees instantly which is the one she must set herself to gain over by flattering, or by that pliability of manner, in which her continual care for her own interest has rendered her an adept. In the same way, thanks to her habit of constantly changing her position, which transports her from the Faubourg St. Germain to the Marais, and from the Chaussée d'Antin to St. Marceau, she has learned to proportion her tone, her language, and even her gestures, to the step of the social ladder on which her employer of the moment may be placed;—she is taciturn or talkative, imposing or simple, respectful or familiar, according to the rank, age, and fortune of the person to whom her duties for the time belong; and he who should see her exercising her functions at the house of any one example taken from each of the various grades she attends, would find it difficult to believe her always the same person.

Whether Madame Jacquemart has, or has not, a family and connexions, is of little consequence, since she could never go to visit them, or receive them at her temporary abode; the most she can do is to pass forty-eight hours together, some two or three times a year, with Monsieur Jacquemart—for Madame Jacquemart is subjected, like every other woman, to the conjugal yoke: she was even in haste to be remarried, on becoming a widow, seeing that not only does she wish to find some one to receive her on the rare occasions when she returns to her home, but she cannot confide the care of her dwelling, and of the rather handsome furniture her two rooms contain, except to a well-assured person. She chose three days, therefore, between an inflammation of the lungs and an acute rheumatism, which demanded her attentions, to espouse Monsieur Jacquemart, which Monsieur Jacquemart, an office-waiter of thirty-three years' standing to the Minister of the Interior, established himself, thereupon, in the little manor of two rooms aforesaid, and comes every week to the address she points out, to bring her a change of dress, give her intelligence of her little dog and her canary, and receive the five shillings produced to her by each day and night, together with baptismal fees, &c. &c.—a sum which he is charged to deposit in government securities, and which she invariably gives to him undiminished, for never has she occasion to expend three farthings.* Their interviews, which are often interrupted by the summons of a bell, never last more than ten minutes; they take place in the ante-room or entrance hall, and do not permit a superfluous word to be spoken: it will, therefore, be at once perceived, that they are not likely to sue for a divorce on the ground of incompatibility of temper.

Madame Jacquemart is evidently deprived of all those pleasures in which many persons of her class so exceedingly delight: the public walks, the theatres, the dancing assemblies, are things of which she remembers to have heard spoken in her early youth, but from the enjoyment of which she is interdicted. Should some chance present her with a few hours of leisure, she takes care not to lose them in useless runnings hither and thither, but goes to visit those whom she calls "her

* The days of a Nurse, comprising the nights, are always paid at the rate of six francs.

ladies," informs herself as to their condition, takes those to task who have suffered the year to pass without demanding her cares, and ascertains precisely at what period this or that person, among her customers, will send to summon her. With the exception of these rare outgoings, Madame Jacquemart dispenses habitually with the pleasure of breathing the pure air; for were it in the heat of July she would not open a window, unless in the extremity of her "lady" fainting from suffocation. Add to all these privations that of sleep during a large portion of the year, and every one will be ready to say, "Madame Jacquemart is the most unfortunate creature in the world!" Such is, however, by no means the case, especially if, thanks to the protection of some celebrated accoucheur, she has arrived at the dignity of nursing "lady mothers" only.

It is very true, that through many nights she may not find it possible to extend her person on a bed, as most of us accustom ourselves to do; but she has contracted the habit of sleeping equally well day or night, and that whether on a sofa, in an arm-chair, or even on a three-legged stool; nay, at need, she will sleep as she stands! Thus the principal difference is, that Morpheus gives her her due in small change instead of paying her in larger coins; and she suffers so little from this, that no sooner does one arouse her for the performance of some service, than she springs to her legs with a look as cheerful and ready as if she wakened up naturally after a rest of seven hours' duration.

Breakfast time being come, Madame Jacquemart receives an enormous cup of coffee, well softened with cream; this is one of the pleasantest moments of her day, for a beneficent fate has decreed that Madame Jacquemart should be the least in the world of a "gourmande"—gluttonous were too positive a term—it would describe her falsely! Poor Madame Jacquemart! good meals are to her an important compensation for much that in her life would seem to be disagreeable. Living always with rich people, or at least with people in easy circumstances, she participates daily with great delight in the various savoury and nourishing dishes, with which she could not regale herself in her narrow home. All attend to her known predilections in this respect; but if they did not, she would know how to compel attention, and is frequently heard to speak of the excellent house she has just left, for the purpose of piquing the vanity of those among whom she finds herself. At her dinner, her supper, and even at intervals between these two meals, comes a good glass of wine to lighten her spirits and keep up her strength: then she has her snuff-box, and from this she extracts, every five minutes, an amusement which gratifies her exceedingly, with the additional merit of keeping her awake: moreover, she has the comfort of not having to pore over a needle from morning till night, as doth many a poor seamstress, for some ten-pence a day. But some will say: "I can't see in all this a single intellectual enjoyment." Patience! Madame Jacquemart is no more deprived of this than any other reasonable creature,—only she must seek it in the contracted circle of her habits and modes of thought. First of all, Madame Jacquemart is a lover of gossip; and Madame Jacquemart is never alone: hence, to relate something, however little attention may be given to her, is one of her most lively pleasures; thus she makes those around her endure many a narration, more or less circumstantial, of her own past life, or of the romantic events that have occurred in

the families amongst whom her days have been spent. She does not hesitate at a little exaggeration, or even at invention itself, ('twere harsh to say "lying" of poor dear Madame Jacquemart's variations,) provided she succeeds in exciting interest; so that, for the most part, she adds to the satisfaction of speaking,—which, to her, is a very great one,—that of a clever author who exercises his genius in the relation of fables. Sometimes her youthful years are enveloped in a mystery which authorizes the most varied conjectures, and gives room for the most fantastic stories: "Early married to a thoughtless young man, she was left a widow, without fortune, and with four children, all in their earliest childhood:" or she speaks of her first grievous and prolonged confinement. In the days when her temper is darkest, is she tired of prating about the amusements of her youth?—she transports herself to an hospital, where she is understood to have passed some of the best years of her life. All these mental excursions do not fail to throw a certain variety over her existence: she does not hesitate, then, to imagine for herself a past according to her own fantasy, and so completely does she identify herself with these dreams, that at length she believes herself to have actually suffered all she describes. Now, as a young woman who endures no pain, and is yet compelled to continue with her pillow, finds this but dull work, the babble of Madame Jacquemart is sometimes heard with tolerance even by her patient; or, if it be otherwise, she throws herself on the servants, with whom she finds time enough to hold long conversations either in the ante-room or kitchen, or sometimes even in the lady's own chamber, where she talks in a low voice with the waiting-maid.

As a consequence of her taste for narration, Madame Jacquemart is very curious: she knows that a great poet has said, "he who sees nothing, will have nothing to say;" therefore, the day when a few visitors may be admitted, is waited for by her with excessive impatience, and provides her with much pleasant amusement. No sooner is a lady announced than she establishes herself at the window, knitting in hand—knitting having this advantage, that it can be left at any moment, without inconvenience; there her eyes and ears are used in a manner so wonderful, that at the end of three seconds she is in a condition to describe every feature and the whole toilet of her who has just entered, while not a word of the conversation escapes her: she makes her little reflections in discreet silence, approves or criticises what is said, and amuses herself with the scandal, if her good fortune contrive that any thing so pleasant should glide into the discourse. It is, however, only on rare occasions that she continues a mere observer of the scene; for besides that, on the slightest question being addressed to her, she seizes the opportunity to reply with her usual loquacity, the baby must be displayed,—it is her office to make the visitor remark "How close is the little love's resemblance to its papa, although it is already obvious that it will have the fine eyes of its mamma,"—with a thousand other common-places which she has been repeating through the last twenty-five years, for each individual she has seen enter existence, and which she could not dispense with, though father, mother, and child were all of the most repulsive ugliness.

One other enjoyment of Madame Jacquemart, and doubtless the most vivid, if we may judge by the almost general inclination towards it of the whole human race, is the pleasure which results from the power to command; for excepting the ten minutes of

the doctor's visit, when Madame Jacquemart lays down her sceptre and bends respectfully while receiving his orders for the day, it is she who reigns without a rival in the chamber of her patient. No one may half-open a door, light a taper, or mend a fire, till she sees fit, in her wisdom, that it should be done. However gently one knocks at a door, it is never softly *enough*; and for this she will reprove the very master of the house himself. She suffers no visitor to pass without having first well assured herself that he is in no degree offensive, nor without entreating him to speak in the lowest tones. If the slightest noise is heard in the most distant room of the house, she rushes out in a fury, "to silence those people who are going to make her lady's head ache."

The cares she lavishes on the mother do not prevent Madame Jacquemart from watching incessantly over the child. It is she who points out the place where the cradle of the newly-born must stand; who prescribes the quantity of sugar to be put into the glass of water of which he is to drink a few drops; who presides over all that concerns his toilet, sleep, &c. In short, she directs, she orders, she exercises absolute sovereignty from morning till night. Madame Jacquemart speaks with high authority to most of the servants: and while she can be very gracious with the waiting-maid, who seems to possess the confidence of her mistress, and with him whom she knows to have the care of the wine-cellar, yet is she most imperious towards the other domestics, if they neglect the many precautions she is continually recommending, for the purpose of convincing them how important is her presence; and her astonishment would be great indeed, should any one find her dictum unreasonable, when the matter in question touches "the life of her patient."

Madame Jacquemart is not content with subjecting the servants only to her iron yoke: she extends it over the mistress also. Armed with the doctor's prescriptions, she never approaches the bed without some such command as that Madame must take a little soup, some particular beverage, or whatever else it seems good to her to order in *her* turn. It is well if, still dissatisfied with this semblance of power, she do not undertake, in certain cases, to point out some old woman's remedy which she declares herself to have seen work marvels. The observation that, "if it do no good, it will certainly do no harm," is the common exordium to this kind of proposition. Should the poor lady have the misfortune to listen to it, Madame Jacquemart then adds the importance of the veritable doctor to that of her own functions; and thus she doubles her influence over all that surround her. Think of that!—to say nothing of her having an absolute passion for the exercise of the curative art, and being never so happy as when usurping the gold cane of the doctor.

Take care how you speak before Madame Jacquemart of any one disease under the sun: she has suffered them all!—each and every! On this subject, her knowledge is inexhaustible. Not only will she discourse by the hour of such ills as threaten her peculiar patients, but of all the maladies that flesh is heir to. There is no disease for which our Nurse has not a cure; and she would undertake the most dangerous, as well as the most simple, with an unshaken reliance on her own skill. Thus, in the house she inhabits, no soul can give himself a sprain, or venture on a cough, but she will instantly settle what species of bath he must submit to, or what decoction he must swallow. Then her memory is so crammed with anecdotes

of such miracles as are worked by leeches, infusions, fumigations, *et hoc genus omne*, that one might fairly call her a walking dictionary of domestic medicine.

Madame Jacquemart is always anxious that the lady should herself nurse the infant, because her presence is then necessary up to the moment when she has succeeded in well-schooling and drilling the nurse-maid; and Heaven only knows with what arrogance she issues her orders to that unhappy tyro, who yet takes excellent care not to displease her in the veriest trifle, so essential does she believe the approbation of Madame Jacquemart to the security of her place. It is always then a great annoyance to our friend, if, on arriving, she find a wet-nurse already established, and this quite apart from the diminution of her fees at the baptism, &c. Poor nurse! she is invariably an object of antipathy to Madame Jacquemart, who finds a thousand means of vexing and tormenting her the whole day through. If the child cry, "the poor little love is dying of hunger;" should he take his food well, then "he is over-fed,—one must be cautious in feeding an infant, and the art is not to be learned in a day," &c. &c. At dressing-time, the same plan is acted on. There is a special talent needed for well swathing a baby, and this Madame Jacquemart claims to possess in perfection. Here, then, she is again liberal of her counsel: "Take care! you are squeezing him too much—you are making him quite red!" or, "Do take away that great pin there, close to his heart: why, 'tis enough to kill the child!" Then the poor young mother begins to tremble, and calls out from between the curtains, "Listen to Madame Jacquemart, nurse!—Do exactly as she tells you." And Madame Jacquemart exults in the depths of her soul, and holds up her head with the pride of a General who has just gained a victory!

The consciousness of her importance never deserts Madame Jacquemart, but this does not prevent her from divesting herself, on proper occasions, of a certain respectful stiffness that distinguishes her manner, and assuming an air of cheerful benevolence. This metamorphosis is effected in the course of her transit from the palace of a duchess to the back shop of a tradesman. She arrives at the house of Monsieur Leroux, a fat butcher of the Rue St. Jacques, whose wife requires her help for the third or fourth time: she enters smilingly, and without ceremony, greets the shop-boys with a look of old acquaintanceship, nods at the little nurse-maid, and accosts the master with a friendly remark,—"Here I am again, Monsieur Leroux! well, so much the better;—that dear Mrs. Leroux; let's hope that we shall get through this affair as well as we have got through all the others." Here, all proceeds simply, with round unvarnished phrase, and in good "hail-fellow-well-met" style: the gossip with her patient never ceases, for Madame Leroux is much amused by relations that give her a view of high life, that describe elegant ladies, magnificent hotels,—a thousand things in short connected with the great world, of which she could have no notion but for the details of her nurse; and Madame Jacquemart fairly revels in the delight of pouring forth her store of histories, tragic and comic. She is besides in excellent temper here, exacts nothing, gives trouble to nobody, is always ready to offer little services in the household, and goes to the narrow kitchen to prepare her own coffee, "for you are not to suppose that I take the airs of a princess, because I wait on great ladies." The result of all this is, that Madame Jacquemart is treated at Monsieur Leroux's like a friend of the family;

she takes her meals with them, and is present with the guests at the christening feast. When they sit at their daily dessert of cheese, Monsieur Leroux brings a bottle of old brandy, which he calls Madame Jacquemart's ancient friend,—then what laughing! what gabbling! or rather what listening to Madame Jacquemart's gabble,—for she tells stories of every kind and colour,—what lingering at table, too, for we must not leave the renovating bottle in a hurry; Madame Jacquemart will certainly not be the first to rise, and has taken care to make known how "she has left Nanette with Madame Leroux, and Nanette will give her whatever she may happen to want."

In this place it is obvious there will be an absence of the thousand minute attentions usually demanded by ladies on these delicate occasions: not only are the doors of the house "slammed-to," with violence on all sides and at every moment, but the patient's very chamber is pervaded by the fumes of tobacco, which rise from the shop below, where Monsieur Leroux is often smoking with his boys. Madame Jacquemart bears all this with as much indifference as Madame Leroux herself—nay, she seems to think "these dainty airs belong only to a parcel of puppets who have nerves that support nothing." The truth is, that Madame Leroux recovers with wonderful rapidity, rises on the fourth day, goes down to the shop on the tenth; and this day passed, Madame Jacquemart is at liberty to "up anchor," and convey her cargo of precious cares to other latitudes.

The dress of Madame Jacquemart is always well arranged, yet she takes care to have it known that her toilet occupies her but the twinkling of an eye; nay, it was always as quickly finished even when she was young and pretty: she favours you with this valuable piece of biography very frequently, and this gives you the opportunity of remarking that her person, preserved in good case as it is, may still make certain pretensions to comeliness. Should you be so kind as to observe that "she must have been very attractive in her youth," Madame Jacquemart bows with bent eyes and a look of coquetry, for, though your compliment belongs to the past, it has none the less afforded her a pleasurable sensation.

The intellectual exercise most agreeable to Madame Jacquemart is that of calculating in her head, to what total the sum laid aside in the present month will increase her worldly possessions, when the proceeds of the coming month shall be added to it; with this she joins the interest of all for two, three, or four years, according to the time at her disposal for this pleasant arithmetical operation. This calculation has the double advantage of occupying her idle hours, and of carrying her thoughts forward to that happy day when she may at length enjoy the fruit of her long and weary watchings;—at these moments there is present to her a vision of herself, living at ease on a comfortable revenue, and reigning sole sovereign and mistress. Ah! there will be the dear society of Monsieur Jacquemart, and both will be waited on by a handmaiden whom she will presently have made learned in the mysteries of cooking: won't she dine at whatever hour she pleases,—to say nothing of going to bed and getting up at the moment that best suits her!—In short, she sees herself in the prosperous condition of a woman whose fortune is made.

This dream of the future bears her up under all that her present state may inflict of painful or wearisome, insomuch that many years pass before she can prevail on

herself to realize it. One engagement follows fast on another; the wish of increasing her property—perhaps even a half liking for the strange life for which she has contracted the habit,—all conspire to lead her to an age far advanced, before she can resolve on seeking that repose which she believes herself to desire, and which she has as yet never known but in prospect. At length the day comes—she leaves the home of others, to dwell in her own; the poor woman is going to rest herself! But what follows?—Alas! she arrives ill, to die the day after in the arms of that dear Monsieur Jacquemart who has not passed with her as many hours as would make up three months through all the years of their marriage!—she dies rapidly, without much suffering, without having foreseen this termination to her labours,—and after all, she has enjoyed life quite as much as the man of genius, or the possessor of millions!





THE "SAPIN."



THE "RAPIN."*

BY J. CHAUDES-AIGUES.



SHOULD I be so unfortunate as to be a member of the French Academy, I would certainly never take upon myself to sketch the portrait I have in view, for the very title of my subject would stop me short. The word "Rapin," in fact, is not to be found in the dictionary compiled by the immortal Forty. Why, is more than I can presume to explain in a satisfactory manner, as I have never taken the trouble of studying the question. But, as such is the case, I intend to profit by my independence, and jump boldly over the tacit interdiction of the French Academy. Who knows? perhaps the Academy, encouraged by my example, may one day acknowledge the grammatical existence of the word "Rapin," and give it the freedom of the language.

In the mean time, in order to abridge the laborious researches to which the illustrious Forty will be obliged to devote themselves, whenever it may be necessary to discover an origin for the word "Rapin," I consider it my duty, as a natural introduction to the subject I am about to treat, to propose beforehand three possible derivations, between which nothing will remain but to choose. The first was given me in the *atelier* of one of the most celebrated French sculptors of the day, by a "model" who was sitting for a Centaur.

* The "Rapin," has, we believe, no equivalent term in English schools of painting. It bears nearly the same relation to the *élève* in a French *atelier* of painting or sculpture, as a "fag" in our large English schools to an upper-form boy.

I had been questioning all the artists present, anxiously demanding whence the word "Rapin" took its rise.

"Ah! parbleu!" said the Centaur, who had never opened his mouth for the last hour, "'Rapin' comes from '*rat*.'"*

The general burst of laughter with which this strange explanation was received, did not prevent the Centaur from adding, with the most imperturbable *sang-froid*, "Ma foi! If it is not that, what is it?"

This line of argument was conclusive, and admitted of no reply. None of us being prepared to offer a more satisfactory explanation, there was no excuse for our mirth.

"But, my dear fellow," said I, anxious to get out of our embarrassment, "the last syllable, the "*pin*," what do you do with the "*pin?*"

It was now the Centaur's turn to burst out laughing.

"The '*pin*,'" he replied, "why, don't you understand? *rat qui peint*†—*rapin*—it's clear enough;"—and with this he resumed his position, which he had only quitted for an instant, to look us in the face as he favoured us with his contemptuous answer, never once suspecting the enormity of the pun he had just committed.

Several witnesses of this scene, after a few minutes' reflection, declared themselves of the opinion of the Centaur. And, after all, why not? How many expressions, now currently adopted in the French language, owe their origin to some *jeu-de-mots* far less rational than the one just given.

The second explanation of the word "Rapin," which I owe to a man of equally respectable authority, consists in deriving it from the verb *rapiner*, "to plunder"—an etymology which certainly bears no resemblance to the other, but which, considering all things, is neither more flattering for the class it is intended to denote, nor, at the same time—to reason by analogy—more improbable. As for the third,—I give it as the expression of my own personal opinion—an opinion, moreover, pretty generally entertained by others. I believe that "Rapin" comes from "*râpé*," worn threadbare. But, then, in the word "Rapin," it may be asked, what becomes of the circumflex upon "*râpé?*" That is a serious objection, I allow; but it is not one that I intend to admit just now, for, until we have the verdict of the French Academy, every body is still free, if he choose, to write "Rapin" with a circumflex.

After this digression, for which I am sure all grammarians and etymologists will pardon me, I arrive at last at my "Rapin." His age varies from twelve to eighteen. His position in society, if not one of the most brilliant, is, at all events, one of the most honourable. He is generally the son of a house-porter or an artizan; he may possibly, upon the stretch, be the son of some honest and peaceable retired tradesman; but it is very certain that he is never the son of a "nabob." Possible it may be, by some odd chance, that the "Rapin" possesses an "uncle in America,"‡ and that one fine day he may inherit a plum: the case, however, is decidedly rare.

* A French term of contempt, denoting, at the same time, misery and insignificance.

† "The rat who paints." It is impossible to render in English this *jeu-de-mots*, the point of which depends entirely upon the similarity of sound in the French pronunciation of the two syllables "*peint*" and "*pin*."

‡ The favourite "*Deus ex machinâ*" of the French comedy, who arrives at the last with a large fortune to render the lovers happy.

But, to commence the portrait of the personage before me, I must allow, upon examining his face, that my "Rapin" is neither handsome nor ugly. He has eyes, a nose, and a mouth, and that is all that can be said for him. As to the shape of his mouth, the size of his nose, or the lustre of his eyes, they remain so many unsolved problems to the curious, on account of the very trifling degree of consideration generally entertained by the "Rapin" for water! Let it not be supposed that, by such an expression, I in any way mean to intimate that he is a drunkard—far from it, for he is accustomed, doubtless upon principles purely Hygeian, to make a most immoderate use of water at his meals; but the fact is, that except at his daily repasts, he looks upon water as a most useless and insipid liquid; and it happens in consequence that there is no knowing exactly what to say respecting the delicacy of his features, or the tint of his complexion. But, after all, as there are exceptions to every rule, and I fear I might be exposing any exceptional "Rapins" to the reproach of dandyism or effeminacy, I think it wiser to descend from the general to the particular; and, as I happen to be acquainted with a "Rapin" of the name of Theodore, who has a face as ill-washed as may be well supposed by the scanty indications above given, and who, moreover, morally as well as physically, is a "Rapin" in the truest acceptation of the term, it is of him that I shall make especial mention.

Upon a head, of the nature already described, Theodore wears one of the most extraordinary hats that can be imagined, with a brim as extensive, and a crown as pointed as possible. That the hat was once black is an incontestible fact; but, alas! to be believed it must have been seen. In its present state the unfortunate hat, be it the effect of wear and tear, or of its upper coat of dust, is tending most deplorably towards a decided tint of grey. From under its broad brim flows a wild flood of hair, "the like of which no mortal eye has seen," long, tangled, and dry. It must not be supposed that any economical motive has induced Theodore to allow his head of hair to assume the extraordinary form it wears. Heavens! no,—nor any motive of personal vanity either. This reason is a purely artistic one; he has seen portraits of the most celebrated painters, in which the great masters were represented with their hair floating about their shoulders, and he can find no reason why he,—the embryo artist, who one of these days is to become a celebrated painter too—should not, by anticipation, adopt the same costume. There are other matters, however, which grievously embarrass him in this laudable intention. How willingly, for instance, would he send his neckcloth to Old Nick, in order to expose his throat, which there is no reason to suppose less agreeable than Raphael's: unfortunately,—fatal effect of early habits,—the want of a neckcloth is sure to give him a cold and toothache. How willingly, again, would he wear the original and fantastic dress of his fancy—of course in imitation of the painters of the sixteenth century—but, alas! it is all he can do to pay for the simple and "degrading" costume, as he calls it, in which he is imprisoned. Of all the wishes Theodore forms for the perfection of his dress,—the only one, consequently, which he can realise at his ease,—is to wear long hair; and he makes most abundant use of his privilege, without the slightest scruple. Should it be asked why, after all, Theodore bestows so little pains upon the *coiffure* he has adopted, and why, without descending to the delicacies of curling-irons and pomatum, he disdains even brush and comb, the only answer I can give is, that the

luxuriance of his head of hair gives him only very partial satisfaction. What he still wants—what he still desires with an ardour perfectly unparalleled, are moustachios, imperial, and whiskers—in one word, a beard. As long as he can pass his hand over his face without meeting with the bristly resistance of a beard, Theodore will neglect his long locks, and his coat will remain buttoned up to his chin, daubed with oil, streaked with paint, and covered with ashes in sign of sorrow and affliction.

Certainly, to say the truth, the life which Theodore leads is very far from being a very diverting one; nor is it one likely to throw a cheering influence over either heart or face. He is up at seven o'clock in the morning, and at a few minutes after seven at his lord and master's, the celebrated painter So-and-So. We have seen that the occupations of his toilet are not such as to endanger his character for punctuality. Arrived at his master's, Theodore puts the *atelier* in order, airs it well if it be summer, and if it be winter lights the stove, and, setting himself astride upon the flue, embraces it with his legs and arms. At twelve o'clock precisely, and at all seasons of the year, Theodore sets off for the Gallery of the Louvre, to make copies for his master. It is there that he ought to be seen, passing with disdain before the pictures which do not come within his master's principles of art, and flying into ecstasies, on the contrary, before those which his master has recommended him to study. At these moments, Theodore assumes a most knowing and important air: he looks out of the corners of his eyes, with a shrug of his shoulders and smile of compassion upon his lips, at all those who appear to admire that which he disdains, and disdain what he admires. It is at such moments, more than all, that he regrets the want of a moustachio to twirl up with a mien of cavalier superiority. His passing visit to the more important pictures of the gallery once gone through, he establishes himself before that which he has to copy. During the occupation of opening his box, trying his pencils, or preparing his colours, he still throws a few glances to the right and to the left, to see if, peradventure, some foreigner may not be taking him for a person of importance; and when that is over, he sets himself to work with the most inspired look he can contrive to put on. Every stroke of his pencil is indicated by a movement of his head in the contrary direction. The energy of his efforts amounts to such a perfect fever, that one might be almost tempted to offer him the immediate assistance of a cooling draught; and yet, in spite of all this trouble and fatigue—in spite of all the oscillations of his head and the shaking of his hair, when the time arrives for closing the gallery, Theodore has scarcely advanced a step in his work. That does not hinder him, however, from bestowing a very well-satisfied look upon his performance before putting it by until the following day, or from going home to dinner with as good an appetite as if he had been just completing a *pendant* to the Magdalen of Correggio. After dinner he marches off to the Ecole des Beaux Arts, where he works for a few hours before going to bed—and such is the invariable circle in which revolves each consecutive day of Theodore the "Rapin."

Alas! were all his grievances confined to that, the unfortunate wight would not be so much to be pitied; but his life is by no means passed in so quiet and complete a state of solitude as the above account would lead one to suppose. In the *atelier* he is surrounded by a host of sucking Raphaels, who, having passed themselves from the condition of "Rapin" to that of "Elève," render him in turn the victim

of a thousand persecutions. He is their fag—their scrub—their slave, or something very like it; and whenever it may please these good gentlemen to want a fresh supply of tobacco, or to send a letter somewhere, or any other dirty work done, it is Theodore who has to spare them the expense of employing a street-messenger. Be it to go from one end of Paris to the other,—what is that to them? Theodore's legs were made to be used; and he ought to consider himself happy when every separate master has not a separate order to give him.

It would be the greatest error, at the same time, to suppose that, in return for all these multifarious services, Theodore is admitted to any especial privileges, or suffered, upon any odd occasion, to offer a few timid objections. Far from it: he owes these great gentlemen, the *élèves*, all obedience and all respect; and for that very reason, liberty of speech is too great a privilege to be granted him, under any circumstances whatever. Dare to speak!—Heaven help him!—He knows too well the methods employed to impose silence, whenever such a fancy should possess him. At first, the slightest word which falls from his mouth is received with jeers—paraphrased and expounded—turned into ridicule; and then, as the affair grows warmer, the practical jokes commence. His chair is jerked from under him, as he sits at work, and down he falls; or his face is covered with paint and oil; or his half-finished sketch smeared all over, so as to oblige him to recommence his work *ab ovo;* or any other of the thousand practical jokes in fashion in the *ateliers* employed.

Thus, should the unfortunate "Rapin" dare to raise an objection when sent upon a message, or presume to join in a conversation which does not concern him, the reply he may expect is bad enough; but should he ever meet the annoyances of which he is the victim otherwise than with the most imperturbable good temper, and the most perfect resignation—should he take upon himself to fly in a passion, and bully in his turn—woe be to him! The worst is still to come. The affair then becomes serious. His tormentors no longer confine themselves to the various kinds of engaging little jokes above mentioned. He is now seized round the waist by force; the operation is conducted by three or four, or more, according to the resistance opposed; the unfortunate martyr is tied at full length upon a ladder, his heels in the air, and his head downwards; and the ladder is replaced against the wall, until the moment fixed upon for the full expiation of his crime of insubordination.

Another species of punishment inflicted upon Theodore, when mutinous, consists in placing a pitcher of water, or some other vessel of similar nature, over the door of the *atelier*, disposed in such fashion, of course, that he cannot avoid a thorough inundation upon entering. This reminds me of the perfectly authentic anecdote of a circumstance which happened in the *atelier* of the celebrated painter Gros, and which I may be allowed to mention here. One day, Gros had invited two English amateurs to visit his pictures; and, without having the least idea that a "Rapin" among his pupils was in disgrace with his other *élèves*, entered the *atelier*, preceded by the two Englishmen, who were advancing with all due gravity of step, when all on a sudden, as the door was opened to its full extent, the noise of a rushing fall was heard, and the two strangers were covered from head to foot with a profusion of fresh water and bruises. Great was the trouble of the painter to make his guests comprehend, and still more to *take*, the joke; while he himself probably drew the

following moral reflection from the circumstance, that politeness has ever its reward, for had he taken into his head to walk in before his guests, he alone, in fact, would have been the victim.

In the midst of all these troubles and tribulations, it may be well supposed there exist no very frequent occasions for the favourable developement of Theodore's mental powers. It must be owned that, as far as concerns the independence, or the elevation, of his ideas, not much is to be expected of him. When, indeed, should the poor devil find time to think, drawn and quartered as he is between his labours done to order, and his state of "Paria"-ism, so full of vexations, unceasingly renewed? It would be no good, therefore, asking his opinion, even in matter of painting; for, as to what may be really called "opinion," he has none. His master's opinion is his,—so he says, at least, and so he believes. As his master happens to be a celebrated colourist, Theodore affirms that, of all the qualities of a great painter, "colour" is indubitably the most valuable and important. Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael he scorns; the Florentine and Roman schools he treats with disdain; while he shouts, "The Venetian school for ever!—Titian and Paul Veronese for ever!—Those are your true painters!" Were the ideas of his master different, his opinion would be as completely different too; and he would declare as energetically that drawing and expression were all in all in painting, as he now swears by "colour."

Upon any other subject, Theodore's ideas are even still less remarkable, if it be possible; for he has positively no ideas at all. Get him off the subject of painting, and he scarce knows what you are talking about. As to literature, he knows not even what it is. He is aware, to be sure, that books exist; but he hardly knows the name of any books of the most elementary description, and he has no conception of their possible utility. Between poetry and prose, I am not sure whether he establishes any difference at all, unless it be in the length of the lines. After all, verse or prose, it is all one to him. He once found, upon the stove of the *atelier*, a volume of the *Orientales* of Victor Hugo, of which it was impossible for him to read through any two consecutive stanzas; and another time, Eugene Sue's novel, *La Salamandre*, fell into his hands, and he was seized with a fit of yawning before he got to the bottom of the first page,—two very evident proofs of his disdain for literature in general. Nevertheless, to do him justice, I ought to add that he does not possess so utter a contempt for the modern drama. The *Tour de Nesle* and *Lucrèce Borgia* won his especial approbation; and he told me the day after he happened by chance to see these two pieces acted, that he had found in them *some capital subjects for pictures*.

If it be asked what Theodore's opinions are upon the subject of politics, I am obliged to confess my complete ignorance upon the point. I never in my life heard him pronounce a single word that in the least bore upon politics; and I believe it would be entirely news to him were he to be informed of the Revolution of July, the accession of Louis Philippe, and the struggle between the prerogatives of the Court and those of the Chamber of Deputies. Were he to hear any firing in the streets, in case of an insurrection, he might probably lay aside his brush to look out of the window; but most assuredly he would never have the curiosity to inquire for whom or for what all the noise was being made. Upon the subject of religion, the case is much the same. All your new-fangled religious sects are so many non-existent

theories to Theodore. He once happened, however, to see, at a hairdresser's window, a bust in wax of "Father Enfantin," the quondam chief of the Saint Simonians; but, as there was no name attached to it, he took it simply for a fancy portrait, and found great fault with the composition of the face.

Does love, then, form no feature in his existence? Ah! we here strike a chord which doubtless ought to resound beneath our touch, but which gives back only a dull and deadened note. Love, in its mysterious and Platonic sense, is completely unknown to Theodore; and how, in fact, should it ever have been revealed to him?—to him who has never heard aught but words of bitterness and irony,—who has never been able to deposit his sufferings in the bosom of a friend?

Among the various female models whom he has seen in his master's *atelier*, more than one, it is true, without his exactly knowing how to account for his sensations, has caused his heart to beat with violence. Poor boy! Timid—habituated to humiliations of every kind—maltreated frequently before the very objects of his passion—as may be well supposed, he has not the courage to confess the feelings he experiences, and he supports this additional torment of his life in silence. There are moments, it is true, when the desire seizes him of conquering his weakness, and no longer concealing all that is passing in his mind, were all the ladders and water-pitchers in the establishment to be called into requisition to punish him for his insolence; but scarce has he opened his mouth when he is stopped short by a burst of ironical laughter in his face, from the very object of his flame, and he then resigns himself to his fate with a sigh of despondency.

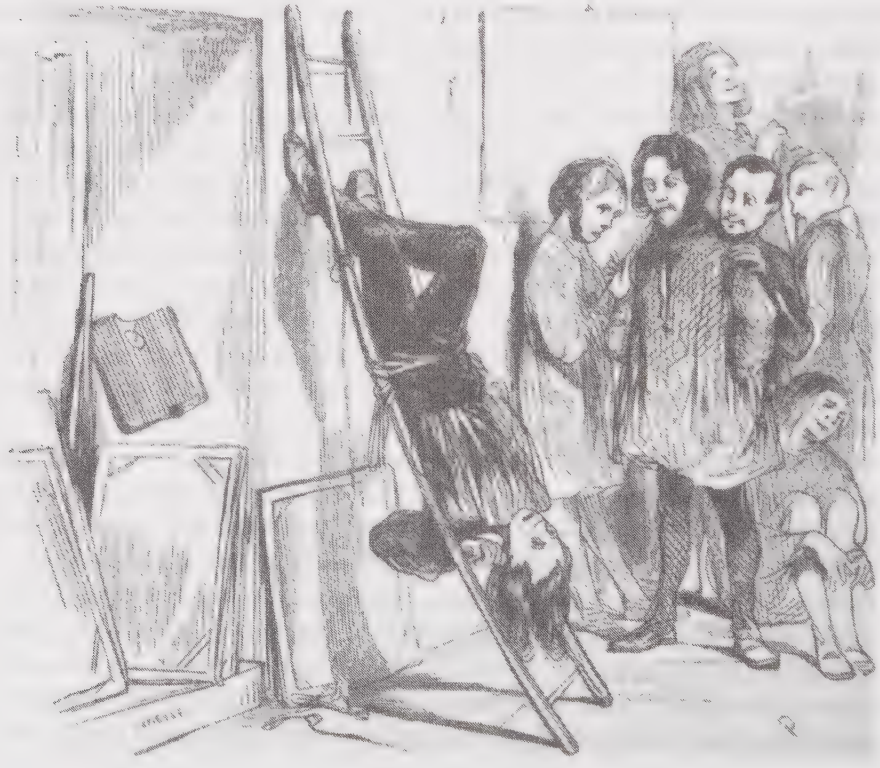
He resigns himself to his fate, for he knows that this state of misery will have an end; and, in truth, were such a life as that of which I have endeavoured to sketch some of the particulars,—were such a life of torment, without compensation of any kind, to last for ever, he had better hang or drown, to put an end to it at once. What an existence is that of a "Rapin!" To have nothing of one's own—to do nothing for one's self—to be loved by none, not even by a dog, for a dog must be fed, and it is all the poor "Rapin" can do to find sufficient food for himself—to be a slave, without even the privileges of a slave, without a slave's wages or a slave's rights—to live always alone, without even the permission to utter a soliloquy when another person is by—to stagnate in a condition of brutalizing ignorance respecting all men and all things, which have no immediate reference to the art of painting—to know nothing, and to will nothing—to receive only blows—to hear only abuse. What an existence, indeed!

A slight consolation for the "Rapin" is, as I have said, the certainty that this state will one day have a termination. The post of "Rapin" in an *atelier* always belongs to the last comer; and the very day that a new recruit arrives, Theodore will be promoted to the rank of *élève*, and very different then will be his lot. He who, the day before, as we have just seen, was a poor boy, scoffed and scorned by all around him, will be all at once invested with an important position in the artistic hierarchy; he, in his turn, will have a "Rapin" to send here and there about town, like a "nigger;" he may enter into conversation with the fair models of his master's *atelier*, and smoke his pipe without any of the disagreeable results alluded to; he will learn to know the literary works of the first authors of the day, from hearing them recited, with all complacency, by themselves; still more ——. But I

forget: it is Theodore's present, and not his future fortunes with which I have to deal.

Let those who would convince themselves of the exactitude of the details I have given as to the "Rapin," visit any French school of painting, and they will not doubt of my impartiality. I have the consciousness of having neither flattered nor disfigured the being in question. Every one who has paid a visit to the annual exhibition of modern artists in the Louvre—and who does not, now-a-days, pretend to be a connoisseur in pictures?—must have seen the "Rapin." It is on the first day of opening the exhibition that he likes best to show himself. He is at the gate of the Louvre by the earliest dawn, and must be almost driven out before he will quit the gallery. It is there that all who will may verify the truth of what I have advanced as to his dress, the important airs he gives himself, his affectation of assurance, and the nature of his opinions upon Art.

I must not, however, terminate my sketch without adding, that the "Rapin" involuntarily follows the stream of regeneration which is bearing the age along towards a brighter destiny: he is in a rapid state of civilization. At the present hour, he is no longer so unwashed, so uncombed, or so besmeared with paint, as he was not long since; and I have every reason to believe that Theodore's successor will, in that respect, as well as in many others, make grand strides beyond him in the "march of intellect."





A LEADER OF FASHION.



A LEADER OF FASHION.

BY MADAME ANCELOT.



EXTENDED at length upon an easy couch, lay a young and beautiful woman, absorbed in an uneasy reverie. "Is it possible? Who would have thought it? What is to be done now? murmured she to herself. As she spoke, her large blue eyes were raised, without the least change in her graceful reclining position, and fixed upon a mirror so placed that the fair dreamer could not fail of seeing her whole form reflected in it from head to foot. She remained for a few moments in silent and attentive contemplation of those regular and delicate features, and that noble form of outline, the first freshness of which nothing has as yet changed. A profusion of fair and silky curls escaped from under a light morning cap, thrown, as it were, upon her pretty head less as a covering than as an ornament, while the ribbons, floating as they might, served only to attest the negligence which had presided at the morning toilet—that happy negligence, which bestows upon the mistress of her art such grace as to make it appear impossible for the most brilliant dress to add aught to her beauty.

To see the languid air of sadness and despondency which pervaded the whole person of this young beauty, in general so stately, so imposing, so completely mistress of her every movement, word, and look,—those who knew her might have supposed her engaged in studying some fresh coquetry, some new expression, more graceful and captivating than the last. But no—the soft indolence, the vague

reverie of her whole appearance were unstudied; there was no art in her charming attitude; and the power of fascination which she possessed at the moment, unknown even to herself, proceeded from the very fact that it was unknown, that she had for once forgotten to think of herself, and that all her movements, all her repose were natural—so completely concentrated were her powers of thought upon the one object of her secret uneasiness, which constituted the great interest of her life.

It was something new to see Emma, the gay and brilliant Countess de Marcilly, whom Fashion had made its favourite divinity, thus *triste*, out of spirits, lost in thought—half reclining upon a sofa of blue velvet, which served to set off admirably her golden hair and delicately fair complexion—her head slightly stooping, as if borne down, in spite of herself, by the weight of profound and serious thoughts too heavy for her feeble force to bear. One of her long, white, flexible hands drooped languidly by her side, and was lost in the folds of the *peignoir* of white cachemere, bound round her slender waist by a silken cord and tassel, as if only for the purpose of attesting the delicacy of that elegant figure, the outline of which could scarcely be discovered in the ample fulness of her dress: the other involuntarily rested upon an almost imperceptible gold chain, which the fair dreamer had thrown about her neck a few minutes before, by a movement, doubtless, perfectly mechanical, for she had never once cast her eyes upon the small watch which the chain supported, and which her fingers had caught and still retained without design or purpose. Had, however, the face of the watch, or those of the clocks about the room caught the eyes of the young Countess, it would have been in vain: she would have seen nothing. What was the hour to her? She had neither a hope nor a recollection to recall, which would have made her heart beat higher. Emma had never loved but herself alone in the world, and, absorbed as she was at the moment by one idea, there were neither days, nor hours, nor aught else that marked the time to her. Her whole existence was bound up in what then occupied her. To gain the day—to triumph—every thing was in that one thought: there was nothing beyond it.

For some time she continued thus motionless; but her thoughts escaped, in spite of herself, from her lips: her words betrayed the secret agitation of her mind; and her looks anxiously interrogated the glass before her, the involuntary confidant of her hidden fears. "Have I, then," she murmured, "lost any thing of my beauty, once so much admired? Has any change, unperceived by my own troubled sight, robbed my face of its former power to charm? Have I forgotten in my dress that art of elegance, which admits of all the grace of fancy without drawing too near to that fantastic irregularity which borders upon the ridiculous? What is it for me to be beautiful, if not the most beautiful? What to be admired, if not the most admired? What to be remarked, if not the only one remarkable? It were better to be first in a poor village than second in Paris." Emma could not help smiling as she parodied the well-known saying.

"Yes, Cæsar was right," she added. "He was the greatest, because he was the most ambitious; and ambition is only man's coquetry." And as she spoke, the ambitious beauty wore the proud air of a conqueror, sure of regaining by the force of arms the power audaciously disputed by another.

"What sacrifices have I not made?" continued Emma, as if to augment her courage by a recapitulation of her incontestable rights to the power which appeared falling from her grasp. "What pains have I not taken to ensure my triumph, and keep my place as a Leader of Fashion, in times when glory is so capricious, and places so difficult to keep? Consummate tact as much as good fortune—address as much as beauty—calculation as much as opportunity, were all necessary. Had I ever listened to the dictates of my own pleasure, my own caprice, my own heart, I should have risked the loss of every thing. It is a power, like all others, envied, contested, attacked at every moment; and the reputation of a *femme à la mode*, like that of a statesman, is continually called in question and endangered. Was there not Madame de Merinville last year, who attracted the attention of the gay world for a whole week with her stately beauty? Fortunately, she had so little tact or talent, that at the first party select enough to admit of conversation I had no trouble in showing off her silliness and overthrowing her empire at once—for without *esprit* none can reign long. Then there was Lady Morton, who might have contrived also to captivate the capricious fancy of the world of fashion, had not her style of dressing been so extravagantly singular that it degenerated into bad taste. It was eccentric, to be sure, but without all grace; and the simplicity of my dress beside her was admirably calculated to set off all the absurdity of hers. In France, if bad taste pleases, it is but for a moment. As for the brilliant Duchess de Romillac, she was, indeed, a formidable rival. Her rank, and fortune, and *éclat* might have borne off a triumph in this world of varieties—she occupied the general attention for a month. But she had the imprudence to lose herself with that handsome D'Arcy; and, for a *femme à la mode*, who should know how to make use of the most dangerous hopes only as additional weapons, and turn them adroitly to account in the interest of her own power, to love really, is to abdicate at once. My power fortified itself the more with all the lustre of my fallen rivals. Every danger appeared passed. And now," continued Emma, with an expression full of grief and bitterness, "it is she! she! Alice de Verneuil—a mere country cousin, whom I received into my house when after two years' widowhood she came to Paris. It is she! though far less handsome than myself, less elegant, and far less occupied with the endeavour to please—it is she who now attracts the eyes of all."

With these words the fair Countess fell back into a state of the most profound dejection. For the first time she began to entertain serious fears for the loss of her sovereign sway. She at length felt that it was possible for the moment to arrive when she might exist without being the *femme à la mode*. Until then she had believed the title so identified with her own person that death alone could deprive her of it. To live and not to be the first was not to live at all. For from the day that Emma had seized upon that inexplicable favour, so capricious, so frivolous, and yet so powerful, which the sceptre of Fashion bestows, her whole existence had been changed. All friendship had ceased. Other women were in her eyes so many rivals—the world only a theatre, where she played a constant part—and its pleasures only an opportunity of display. Her dress was no longer the chaste attire of the modest female, nor the graceful adornment of the woman who knows that she is loved, and still less the negligence so full of charm of her who forgets herself to think but of another. All that vanity combined with magnificence, luxury, and

wealth could furnish, at whatever price, were first called into action—then ideas of extravagant whims and fanciful refinement, in order to recall the flagging attention of a fickle world. In fact, every faculty of her mind, every hour of her day, was devoted to the task of fixing this fleeting power, as impossible to define as to preserve.

For who can say how or why that Queen of Fashion, the *femme à la mode*, is placed upon her throne. It is not beauty, the only incontestable power of woman, that ensures supremacy,—for the most beautiful often pass unnoticed. It is not wit or talent, those invisible spirits, which controul all others,—for very often the idol of the day has none. It is not rank, that superiority which pride no longer admits, for the capricious goddess has never owned its claims; and palaces have been before now deserted for the *boudoir* of a Ninon de l'Enclos. It is not wealth, for fashion frequently, without the least consideration, covers with ridicule the glittering gold, of which vanity makes such parade. There are no sure means for attaining to the pinnacle, nor rules for keeping it, when gained.

Every effort was, consequently, employed by Emma to succeed, and, uncertain of the causes of her favour, she left no means untried. Relations—friends—fortune —every thing was sacrificed to this insatiable desire of display. Pride, vanity, and egotism had destroyed all tenderness, sensibility, and affection in her. And were Emma to have lost her title as *femme à la mode*, what would have then been left to her? Her mind was lost in endless reflections. Never did Cabinet, with a prospect of defeat from a doubtful majority before its eyes, plunge into so vast a field of conjecture as to the causes of the downfal feared or the triumph yet to be obtained: never did her fertile imagination suggest to Emma more abundant means for reducing her rebel subjects to allegiance—more *coups d'état* to startle the curious novelty-hunters of the day—more trifling favours,—which she could bestow without, however, compromising her dignity,—upon the more refractory.

"In our morning drive, at our ball at night, how they surround her, one and all," pursued Emma. "Even to the Count de Prades, who has eyes for none but her—he, the disdainful, whom all the women have sought to captivate in vain—he, who has always worn that air of indifference and *ennui*, which never fails to excite the curiosity and coquetry of our sex: for how, indeed, is the pleasure to be resisted of attempting to succeed where all have failed, of striving to gain the love of one who loves nothing beyond himself, of endeavouring to divert a mind from the all-absorbing influence which appears to divert it from all else? It is a task worthy the most bold and enterprising. To carry off a man from the affections of another woman, is a mere nothing: but to carry himself off from his own self-love, or from some unknown *souvenir*, to triumph over a rival of whom one can say no ill—to do the impossible in fact—that is indeed a triumph which repays the pains bestowed. It is an aim worth the effort—and this aim Alice has attained without an effort, and unknown even to herself. All the world has observed the marked attentions of the Count. She alone appears not to remark it. She appears even to avoid him: and it is exactly that, which makes them all so eager to join in the chace."

Emma remained again lost in a labyrinth of conjecture. For upon the homage of two or three heroes of fashion depends the place assigned to a woman in society; and it had been she who had attracted to her feet all those who thus dispose of

fortune's favours, until the moment when Alice came, obtained the exclusive attention of the Count de Prades, and thus soon found the general admiration directed to herself.

The fair dreamer never stirred. So absorbed in thought was she, that it was as if startled from a heavy sleep that she at last exclaimed, with a movement of the liveliest surprise, "Ah! Alice; are you there?"

Before her stood Madame de Verneuil, a charming brunette, with a face full of animation and expression, who answered, smiling, "Well, and did you not expect me for our morning's drive?"—and she examined with surprise the complete undress of Emma's attire, which either announced a total forgetfulness of their arrangements, or a change of plan.

"You counted upon my going, did you? and you counted also, without doubt, upon our meeting Monsieur de Prades?"

The expression of the Countess, as she spoke, was stamped with the bitterest disdain. Alice never answered, and when Emma saw her quietly sitting down, as if giving up all thoughts of going out, she felt the most violent inclination to quarrel with her.

"Since you are so fond of the world and its places of assembly," she pursued, "why, I should like to know, did you imagine a pretext for not appearing at my last night's party, where all that is most brilliant in Paris was collected?"

Alice only smiled.

"You refuse, too, to vouchsafe me a reply, it would seem," added the Countess, with impatience, after a moment's silence.

Madame de Verneuil remained some moments longer without an answer, but the eyes of Emma were fixed upon her with a look of such sharp inquiry, that she ended by replying, with a smile, "I was unwell—really unwell,—and then—"

"And then—what?" demanded the Countess, almost angrily.

"Since you insist upon it, I will tell you all," replied Alice, archly; "I will tell you every thing;—but you must not be vexed. I own I cannot understand your fashionable parties, where pleasure looks so like *ennui* that I fear to mistake one for the other. The lady of the house invites, it is true, the prettiest and most charming women of the day, and then places them, dressed to admiration and bored to death, around the room, like so many family portraits; and there they sit and listen, with more or less attention, to a concert, more or less worth hearing, for which they never care the least. During all this time their male acquaintances are banished to the other rooms, or posted where they cannot interchange a word with them, and either talk among themselves or to the mistress of the house, who, obliged as she is to do the honours at home, and receive every one with a few words of politeness, is the only lady circulating among the crowd of gentlemen who fill the rooms. She alone is amused. She alone displays her wit, gaiety, and grace, while all her lady guests seem to serve only as a scenic decoration to a comedy, which she acts all alone for the benefit of her own vanity. The brilliant *féte*, in fact, to which she invites them, looks more like a trap set to ensnare them, than a proffered pleasure. As for me, if I fly your amusements *à la mode*, it is because I like to be amused."

Emma raised her eyes, with a look of malicious intelligence, to the face of Alice;

and the two looked at one another with a smile, like those Roman augurs of old, who believed only in two things—their own address, and the credulity of others.

"Am I not right?" resumed the Countess gaily, with the confidence naturally produced by the certainty of being understood; "and the world only admires those who in return care not for the world. But," she continued, "what have I done more than others have done before me? Has not pre-eminence being always and everywhere disputed? As soon as two men existed upon the face of the earth, one killed the other in order to remain the first. From that time downwards there never has been a triumph without its victims. And, if I do immolate a few other vanities at the shrine of my own, where is the mighty evil?

"After all," pursued Emma, in a more marked way, "there are some women, who, however desirous of pleasing all, would gladly reign exclusively in the heart of one alone;—and if Alice did not choose to make her appearance at my party, it was probably because she knew that a certain person was not to be there," she added, in a bantering tone, which took Madame de Verneuil off her guard, and made her reply hastily, "If I had known it, on the contrary, I should have probably decided upon coming."

There was a moment's silence. Alice blushed in uneasy embarrassment at the blunder she had just committed; and Emma felt and knew that a secret existed, and guessed at once the advantage which might probably be taken of it.

"I have mentioned no names," she said with a laugh; "but it appears that the Count de Prades is so perpetually in your thoughts that his name answers instantly to a question asked of your heart."

"What nonsense," said Alice, bursting out into a laugh, "I, who avoid him everywhere ——"

"We only fly from those we fear," resumed the Countess; "we only fear either from love or hate."

But Alice listened no longer. She was hunting about for some object or other impossible to be found. And so Emma, after having placed herself so exactly before the glass that she could follow with her eyes every movement of Alice round the room, continued, with an air of malicious indifference, while she played with the tassels of the cord round her waist,—

"The Count de Prades is handsome, and what is more, witty and clever—a rarity in a man of fashion, as times go. Your men of talent now-a-days lavish their eloquence on politics, and not on women; and society loses considerably on the one side, without gaining much on the other. But so it is. So, when a man of talent, with a personal appearance of any tolerable merit, is left us, Heaven knows how we spoil him; and Monsieur de Prades is the most spoiled of all. Is he not?"

Alice answered not; and the Countess, without paying any attention to her silence, still went on:—

"Accustomed, as he has been, from his earliest youth to admiration, he affects to despise it: used to all the coquettish arts of women, he pretends to be above them: spoiled, perhaps, by a lavish display of the tenderest affections, he would give us to believe that he is insensible to them all. Your men of fashion have so many ill-founded pretensions; and he among the number——"

Alice was still employed in something at the other end of the room; but the disdainful tone of Emma seemed to wound her feelings, for she interrupted her vivacity by saying, "Certainly, affectation cannot be laid to the charge of the Count de Prades—his frankness—his high sense of honour—his truth—"

She stopped, for she felt that she was going much too far in her praises of a man whom she designedly avoided.

"Perhaps so," resumed her friend, without choosing to remark her manner, "for he has proved at least that he is capable of a strong and durable attachment; and his indifference to all around him proceeds from his regret for what he has once lost. I know for certain that he has loved—still loves a woman, beautiful and every way worthy of his love."

All Emma's efforts were at this moment vain to catch a glimpse of the face of Alice, who turned her back to the glass, and was bending over a table, covered with different engravings. And so she resumed the subject of this unknown and all-absorbing attachment,—now stopping for a moment, now going on, interrogating Alice, who replied in a few vague words.

At last, after a short silence, the Countess rose, and glided, with noiseless step, upon the thick carpet behind Alice, who was bending over the drawings, which she affected to examine, and was mechanically uttering the words, "And so you think . . . "—when she felt herself seized round the waist.

It was Emma, who answered, laughing, "I think, Alice—I think,—that you are in love with the Count de Prades."

Alice, turning suddenly round towards the light, in the first involuntary movement of surprise, discovered her pretty face all red and agitated, and moist with tears, and suffered a cry of astonishment and fright to escape her, which was echoed by a cry of joy from Emma; for she knew that the woman in whom a feeling of love and regret could excite a tear, was no rival for a coquette.

She led her friend to the sofa on which she had been reclining, made her sit down by her side, and tried to win her confidence by expressions of kindness and affection. After a few of those useless words,—those phrases half commenced and left unfinished, and demi-confidences, which so generally precede a full confession, Alice at last commenced:—

"About four years ago, before I was married, I was at Baden with my aunt, where I became acquainted with the Count de Prades. During six weeks he never quitted us. I felt so happy when he was by my side that I thought he loved me. I confided all my feelings to my aunt the very day preceding that of our departure; and the same evening she took occasion to speak before him and me of affection, and tenderness, and ties of attachment—I scarce know what. It was for the purpose of discovering the Count's intentions. How little did his ideas respond to her expectations and to mine! He ridiculed all serious affections and real feelings of the heart, pretended that it was impossible for him ever to know anything of the kind, and showed himself in fact as he really was—cold, indifferent, and satirical. Stung to the quick by his tone of mockery, I did not even choose to let him know of our departure. We quitted Baden the following day. My father awaited our return to Paris with a suitable match for me. The marriage was already settled. It was no longer possible for me to love; but I obeyed my father, and a fortnight

afterwards became the wife of Monsieur de Verneuil. I left immediately for the country, determined never to return to Paris. I trembled to see *him* again, for he had too much tact and knowledge of the world not to have divined I loved him. Heaven never blessed my married life. I was unhappy. Monsieur de Verneuil's death has left me free, but without a hope of happiness. I hesitated for two years before I determined on revisiting Paris—and I was right, Emma. But now I quit it again to-morrow, never to return."

Emma gazed upon her as she spoke, with interest, for the face of Alice wore so touching an expression of tenderness, that she almost envied feelings which even in sorrow could be so becoming.

"Four years ago!" she exclaimed, as if speaking to herself. "I remember this journey to Baden, whence he returned so sad. He never went back again;—was agitated once when I spoke to him of that time;—when Alice came and he saw her again, he was much affected—and since then his eyes have never left her."

"Has he never spoken to you of your stay at Baden?" inquired Emma, turning to Madame de Verneuil, "or of your marriage?"

"Never!" replied Alice. "I have never seen him but in company. Once, indeed, he seemed to seek me, but he appeared at the same time to have forgotten the past."

Emma rose hastily, rang the bell, and asked the servant, who entered, whether any one had called.

"Monsieur de Prades has this moment asked whether he could be admitted."

"Let him come in."

As soon as the Count had made his appearance and his bow, Emma begged to be excused, on the score of having still to dress, and, requesting her friend to do the honours in her place, left the apartment.

"Ah! ah!" she repeated gaily at her toilet; "they are alone, and love is a better tactician even than I."

When she returned into the room, they heard her not. Alice was seated near the fire, and the Count was standing, leaning on the mantle-piece. Although alone, they were speaking so low that none but lovers could have heard each other.

A month afterwards, Emma gave one of those *fêtes* to which Alice had alluded. Her rooms were glittering with new and fanciful decorations, and resplendent with the gayest fashions. Never was party more rich in celebrities and lions of every kind: never was the mistress of the house more striking or exclusive in her elegance. No one spoke of Madame de Verneuil: she had married, the day before, the Count de Prades, and had left with him for Italy. They were happy, and forgot the world, who forgot them in return.

The Countess de Marcilly, reinstated, for a time at least, in her empire, continued to watch over it as every sovereign should do, who would maintain his crown, be it a diadem of gold or a wreath of flowers. To be supreme, comprised her whole existence; and so we have not said a word, either of her husband, or her family, or her friends. What woman ever possesses any thing of the kind when she is a *femme à la mode?*



THE PHYSICIAN.



THE PHYSICIAN.

BY L. ROUX.



NOT to believe in "the Doctor" is a venial heresy; to doubt of the *Science* were to walk in the steps of Don Juan; but even in an age so matter-of-fact as the present, scepticism will hardly proceed so far.

One era in the life of a Physician is problematical enough. Furnished with his diploma, he yet but half exists: it is in medicine that he puts his trust; but having a title does not suffice to make him believe that he is established. The patient being as yet a mythos, and the whole human race seeming obstinately determined on continuing in wonderful health, he might easily be tempted to turn astronomer while waiting for practice. However, come what may, he makes a beginning.

The Physician aspirant goes to visit the Deputy for his Department. Now, to guide the first steps of a young Physician, and to take his professional advice, is to the man of the Palais Bourbon* a necessary appendage to his legislative functions: the Chamber of Peers receives its Physicians all primed from the hands of its younger sister, together with its projects of law. Strongly recommended, besides, to a *confrère* already in full practice, the embryo practitioner pays him a visit, and receives from him a patient by way of encouragement,—it being well understood that

* The Palace of the French Chamber of Deputies.

this fortunate patient is to be cured for humanity's sake,—and he takes care not to fail, for the sake of his own reputation. This is the beaten road—an idea that would occur to every one—a precaution too obvious to be neglected by the least inspired of *debutants;* but success demands something more. To be a Physician, it is sufficient that you need only use certain received methods; to become celebrated, you must have a method peculiar to yourself.

To go afoot, when you have renown for your end, is to resolve on arriving late at the goal, or rather on not arriving at all; consequently you set up a carriage. You had a new coat, but you add to this a cloak of the most expensive fashion; you were living on a third floor, you promote yourself to a first; your rich patients in prospect will pay for it, your sick folks will but take you half way. Next, you furnish a splendid apartment, and hang up in your cabinet an engraving of Hippocrates refusing the presents of Artaxerxes, that you may say, without affronting your conscience, "In my house you will find a disinterested Physician." But you are unknown. No matter!—Nay, that is an advantage: everything is to be gained from the moment there is nothing to lose; patients are waiting for health, just as you are waiting for—sickness; that which others would scarcely dare to attempt, lest they should compromise their reputations, may be coolly executed by him who has yet the whole of his credit to make. Have you few patients?—This is the moment for concentrating all your cares upon one—for pursuing your ideal of the perfect in medical science—for exhibiting, in your own proper person, precisely what a Doctor should be. You are he who arrives at the very moment fixed on, who gives a good quarter of an hour to each patient, who tests with minute attention the quantity of drugs sent in by the apothecary, examines carefully all results, pronounces on these as being more or less satisfactory, sits up whole nights at need, applies leeches, follows a disease into the country, and gives gratuitous advice to the servants of the house. There is no kind of venesection that revolts the Physician aspirant: he does not even recoil from bleeding himself, *pecuniarily* speaking. He will sell a "freehold" to buy a practice; for is not a good round of practice a freehold?—Assuredly, and it is often bought ready made.

One sure means of creating a practice is that of presupposing its existence. Many physicians begin by being *celebrated*, that they may compass being *known*. Give your neighbours a good waking-up, and that often; let people come to call you at every hour of the night, in the name of whatever Duchess you please,—you can find enough in the Red Book and Court Guide; let the health of the whole Faubourg St. Germain depend, if possible, on one of your minutes; let a file of emblazoned carriages take their station at your door.—Hurry, hurry! be alive! footmen, horsemen, tigers of all heights, liveries of all colours, at your gates!—Let them make a long string before your door; make them scuffle for admission as at the melodramas. Do this, and the shadow is your own,—be assured that the reality is close at hand!

The Physician must patronize the periodical press, as a means of publicity. If he can manage to set up a journal of the medical sciences—surgical, medico-surgical, or surgico-medical—the business is done. He has laid the foundation of unlimited fame: this will be to him the lever of Archimedes, and science shall not make a step without craving his permission; there does not exist the malady that has not

appeared in his Gazette; young physicians seek his support, elder ones treat him with deference; all fear him, for he is capable of giving a fever to the Faculty itself.

Do you fancy that the Dictionary of the Medical Sciences comprehends all the secrets of the medical art?—A physician of some talent, tired of waiting for practice, or, in plain words, for fortune, set himself to plant tulips: they came up admirably. He had instantly a practice in full flower; all the world flocked to see his collection of tulips; all the world found out that, in the matter of horticulture, Dr. ——— was an excellent physician. Another owes his reputation to a gallery of apocryphal paintings, *authenticated* by the kind testimony of all the celebrated men of the four parts of the world. Inoffensive and benevolent supporters they are, and with more genius than one might suppose: they make a Titian or a Raphael at their pleasure. A third has collected the curious medals of antiquity; he is quoted for the taste and purity of these precious objects; nothing can be more complete than his collection: thus, no one can speak of antique medals without naming the Baron ———, doctor of medicine.

Above all things recollect, that now, when you have most time at your disposal, you are least permitted to lose any of it. Now is the time when a Physician should possess ubiquity. In the morning he is at his hospital; in the day with his country patients; in the evening at a consultation of Physicians, where he must have been detained,—his consultations must be made to have retarded his visits; he arrives late at his rooms,—an extensive practice requires *so much* attention! He takes nothing from the poor for the present, content to visit the sick gratuitously, that he may afterwards have patients. Fame comes at first with loitering step, but let an epidemic arrive, and she travels post-haste. The cholera made some victims, it is true; but then what Physicians has it not created! Many made themselves Physicians *extempore*, moved by the pressing nature of the scourge. Humanity knew not at night that they possessed a diploma; all Paris was acquainted on the morrow with the number of patients they could muster. In Paris, there were some Doctors more, and some men less.

It has often been said that circumstances make the Physician. There are certain obscure diseases, certain sciaticas, that are cured quietly: collected together, they would have no more importance than a cold in the head. To tie an artery, were it the iliac, for a poor wretch in a bye lane, is to have done much for humanity,—for one's reputation very little; but an angina treated successfully, in the person of a Countess, makes up for it,—there is compensation for all! The Physician at first sees certain subjects in an hospital; then he makes a few visits, no matter where. When he is aspirant only, he examines the disease; when he has succeeded, it is the patient he examines. In the first epoch, he can find nothing but reputations unjustly acquired: the great Physicians are quacks; true science is unknown; the delicacy of his conscience is a hindrance to him; he blames himself for having so many scruples. Has he taken his position successfully:—"Do not trust yourself," he cries incessantly, "to those young people with their systems. Bleeding is to them as the mere spilling of water; and they go cutting and slashing to right and left as well the limbs as the questions that fall in their way! Experience has prevailed! The great Physician is alone worthy of being called in!" A consultation will some-

times bring together the two rivals,—the old and the new school: it is a delicate position. The young Physician has only a consulting voice; the "Consulted," on the contrary, enjoys a double vote, and resolves the questions which the other only submits to him; the accessory takes the upper hand of the principal; the young Physician, called in first, costs less money, and sometimes cures,—great Doctors have been known to bury their patients at much expense. Not long since, a young Physician found himself face to face with a "Professor," at the house of a rich patient. Their methods were diametrically opposite. The junior Physician was that of the family, but the other had the authority of a great name in his favour. The "Consulted" blamed openly the system his *Confrère* was pursuing; he was listened to, and the young Physician dismissed, being desired to send in his bill that very day. The patient was still enjoying an appearance of health. "Be very certain of one thing," said the young Physician on giving his bill; "for as great a professor as Dr. ——— is, his patient will die this very night." The young Physician was recalled by the family. What had his patient done, then?—He had died! The art, properly speaking, consists in never predicting but with absolute certainty—in occasioning fear, much more than awakening hope. Patients who go great lengths, always lead their Physicians great lengths also. To believe implicitly in the remedies adopted, is one method of increasing their effect. Quartan fevers have been cured by a few wafers!—Nothing but medicine can save us!

Philosophers, and even Physicians themselves, declare that the study of medicine wears out the soul to the profit of the body. Even before arriving at eminence, the Physician is become profoundly sensual. The sight and study of suffering, in teaching him the means of avoiding it, have rendered enjoyment more precious to him: thus he excels in using, tempering, and developing whatever of pleasure it is given man to know. It is the Physician who roasts his own coffee, who selects his truffled partridges from Chevet's; it is he who invented the pine-apple salad; nay, the greater part of our culinary refinements are derived from the medical body. When humanity is at the highest point of suffering, the Physician is luxuriating in social enjoyments.

On the first step of the medical ladder is placed the Court Physician. The Court has several Physicians. To be well-dressed is a rule that stands high in the list of his "medical requisites;" and from this he never departs, while his practice retains him in the Faubourg St. Honoré, or in the rich hotels of the Chaussée d'Antin. All who pay nobly choose to be treated in like manner. Thanks to the Court Physician, the anecdote of the saloons gains an audience in the palace; he never relates more than the half of what he knows. His Parisian patients are always ill in some other quarter; and he is consulted less on the malady his patient of the moment suffers, than on the diseases he has to cure elsewhere. One word from him contains the bulletins of the ailment it is proper to allow one's self; his prescriptions are so many "orders of the day." Whoever is not a Court Physician has been the Physician of the First Consul, or hopes sooner or later to be the Physician of a future Dictator. This distinction is frequently confounded with that of a Physician who is also a Professor. We know of no existence more varied or more complete than that of the Professor-Physician. To make the interests of science and his fortune

go well together; to have a long list of patients and a large auditory; to be obliged to reveal a thousand secrets for the benefit of the art, yet to let none escape, from regard to what he owes his patients; to have his popularity as Professor, and his renown as a Physician; to make them go hand in hand together; to be profound with the Faculty, and superficial and amusing in the drawing-room;—such is the part he must perform daily. The Professor-Physician has, besides his chair as Lecturer, a fever ward in some hospital, and is invariably a Staff-surgeon also. Pain appears to him under all its phases: hideous and agonizing in an hospital,—dressed up, and almost becoming, in the boudoir of an elegant woman. From an hospital—that purgatory of all wretchedness, physical and moral—he passes into a sumptuous hotel, the very Eden of suffering. Life in Paris—that life, so full of violent contrasts—he knows it intimately throughout. The most gloomy pictures of Ribeira are, in his eyes, pure reality; and equally known to him are the religious and melancholy touches of Murillo. A palace and a lazar-house to him form the world! In his hospital, he is the physician alone—dry, hard, unfeeling—nay, perhaps, even brutal; by the bed-side of a great lady, he is the physician of good company,—he is gentleness itself. In his rooms throughout the morning, he is an absolute monarch; in his visits of the evening, his royalty is a constitutional one at best.

The fashionable world possesses also, in the Physician who prescribes mineral waters, a guarantee that they may safely confide in the sulphurous sites and pumping baths which rise from the bosom of the Pyrenees. The Physician of the baths departs with his patients in the earliest days of June. It is his business to procure waters for his patients, and patients for his waters. Half manager, half man of learning, he has more to do than had Moses in the heart of the desert. Provided the Hebrews had a well, they troubled themselves but little as to whether the waters were more or less carbonated. For the Physician of the baths, the chemical analysis is his concern: he is also responsible for the healthfulness of the localities. Little pamphlets follow each other fast through his hands: the object is to prove that his fountain is super-excellent, although called by the unlearned a pool or pond; and that it is infinitely superior to all filters, known or imagined. Some people have the impertinence to pretend that this place is a sinecure. It is true that the Government, when sealing his patent, cares little about the acquirements needful to make use of it; but to find a man who is at once a physician, geologist, chemist, and traveller, is not easy; so they select a man of a sound political creed, according to *their* reading, and the matter is accomplished.*

When one has the misfortune to be nothing, either by one's titles or employments, one may still establish one's self as Homœopathist, Phrenologist, Somnambulist, or Magnetiser. Magnetism, especially, has set people raving of late years. A few "passes," and four pamphlets, shall suffice to set your public beautifully asleep! What miracles have we not seen produced by these means!—A Physician securing for himself an immense reputation,—in his own immediate circle. He had a daughter who read with her eyes open in an open book!—Sublime of magnetism!

In what class shall we range him whose whole soul is absorbed in the study of Nature in her eccentricities—her phenomena? His house is a museum not unlike

* To each mineral establishment in France, a Physician is appointed by the Government.

to that of Dupuytren. There the Hottentot Venus is seen hand-in-hand with the Apollo Belvidere; a skeleton, whose proportions are a model, is side by side with a twisted Quasimodo, pegged up in brass. In his repertory may be found a second edition of the Siamese twins. Human nature is both sublime and absurd beneath the scalpel of the anatomist: he unites the two extremes in his museum, himself occupying the middle region.

Let us leave this impassioned lover of dead nature, to bury himself prematurely in his bone-house. Let us turn to the Physician of the poor. One is as yet but half dead, when one has recourse to the Dispensary Doctor: he gives his cares to those who can expect none, except on the ground of humanity. Philanthropy has its apostles—not to say martyrs—to climb houses of eleven floors; to penetrate into blind dens of all sorts; to prescribe lemonade of citric acid to those whom four-pound loaves would infallibly restore;—such is the ungracious task of the Philanthropist-Physician. The Administration should choose them young, if it would have them with any feeling. By dint of emotion, the heart becomes petrified; the Physician is formed at the expense of the sensitive being; the sympathies of the soul evanish—they faint and die; the body now seems only a certain substance, more or less organized, which is to be treated indifferently, according to certain methods. In matters of medicine, philanthropy is a mere tradition. Thence comes the Physician who is merely a Physician,—nothing more. Egotism is the basis of his character; the semi-science he possesses has rendered him a materialist; he believes only what he sees; his exalted reason forbids him to pass certain limits, on pain of being called credulous,—a man of inferior intelligence. This love of the real resolves itself into an idolatry of gold. Follow a Physician from his entrance on the beaten path. At first pliant and insinuating, he takes insensibly the dry and cutting tone of one whose credit increases, and whose strong-box gets full. Soon master of his patients and his connexions, his tone will be that of a superior; it will be costly as the words of a lawyer: life and death escape from his lips according to his good pleasure; but he estimates a crown-piece more highly than a man,—money is the end and aim of all his actions. At this period, he has not yet received the Cross of the Legion of Honour; and this is a great affair for the Physician. If he is unable to procure this questionable mark of merit, he buys it, or causes it to be bought. Should the Grand Chancellor of the Legion of Honour reject him from his el Dorado, he has recourse to some equivocal order, which approaches, by the colour of its insignia, to the ribbon so much coveted. Not that he cares for this as a distinction, but that he sees a supplement of patients at the end of a ribbon.

There are some Physicians whose fortune is based primarily on the ignorance, the blindness, the shame which vice inspires even in those most deeply tainted by it; misconduct opens a wound which they make wider; you would believe that they would hide themselves; that the darksome dens in which they await their victims escape the far-seeing eyes of the police. Quite the contrary: these persons even count on publicity; they are in league with bill-stickers, distributors of advertisements in the public streets, who accost the passers-by on the cross-ways, and all that savage and degraded tribe of whom Robert Macaire is the patriarch. Publicity has nothing revolting for the bill-sticking Physician; the grossest snares are those

that catch the most victims; he speculates on a law-suit when publicity is of more importance than the fine,—it is so much gained; the process is a catchword for him; he would make his fortune could all the world know that he has been condemned to so many months' imprisonment, without prejudice to his individual qualities and merits; he knows what his sentence will bring him in the year, and how much he gains per day by being in prison; his enterprise is not bounded by the limits of a Parisian street; let his industry prosper but never so little, and his nostrum extends itself over all the world.

There is, in all professions, the *fas et nefas* which distinguishes the honest man from the scoundrel. An advertisement is to the Physician what a false weight is to the shopkeeper: the law touches both but imperfectly,—public opinion must do the rest.

Does any one desire to reconcile a narrow income with legitimate scruples and exaggerated difficulties. Every one has not the means of ruining himself to make his fortune: he seeks a situation; there are some exclusively open to Physicians. A man may be Physician to a theatre, without ceasing to be a Physician: there, it is his duty to decide how far a cough may be lawful; he is the official judge of inflammations, more or less severe, and always instantaneous, that happen to privileged actresses the very day of a first representation; it is utterly impossible to cheat *him* as to a hoarseness or a sprain; the best performers here exert their seductions in vain; the Physician of the theatre is a lynx for imaginary disorders. The Prima Donna detests the Physician who obliges her every now and then to be well, whether she will or will not: thus she has always in her good graces some young Doctor selected to plead the *per contra* of a headache. Apart from his functions, the Physician of the theatre is perfectly gallant; it is rare, however, that his cares for the mere chorus-singers go beyond the black-currant paste.

The Physician of a recruit company is charged to verify the perfect corporeal integrity of the individuals submitted to his examination; he must display more severity than the law itself, as Government is more captious as to the qualities of a substitute than those of the mere soldier. What is man, physically speaking?—Ask *that* of the Physician in question: he must be complete, indeed, before *he* will accept him for you. St. Peter is not more difficult as to the choice of souls, than the Physician of the recruiting service as to the admission of the future marshals of France.

The Physician of the living has his antipodes in his *confrère*, the Physician of the dead.* This last is called only to assure himself of the non-existence of his patient; one feels an increased desire to live, that one may not need his visit, for he gives legal passports to the other world; deaths and burials are made by his order; you are not to die without his permission. Clothed in black from head to foot, the Physician of the dead is gay as a funeral plume; he exists as a guarantee for the living and the dead; the collaterals are infinitely obliged to him; they owe him thanks!

When it is the purpose of Providence to afflict us, a disease is sent to some, while to others shall come a Physician. Have a Physician for your friend, if not a friend

* There is, in each quarter of Paris, a Physician appointed by the Government, to inspect bodies after death.

for your Physician; he will have the courage to let you into the secrets of the art, and will not find you stricken mortally, when you are but indisposed.

In our days, the Physician must be ambidexter; he has lost his aristocratic prejudices, which did not permit him to be confounded with a surgeon: or rather the surgeon has acquired that knowledge of the internal system which raises him to a level with his brother: he handles a stethoscope; he practises percussion. In England, a Physician leaves his friend struck by apoplexy at his side, to die of the seizure, that he may not be dishonoured by bleeding him!

Since religious faith has become enfeebled in France, the Physician and the Lawyer have acquired a stronger influence over society. What false shame prevents us from revealing to the Priest, we are forced by pain to avow to the Physician, or by interest to unveil to the Lawyer. The Physician is the necessary confidant of all mysteries, and of the most sacred affections; and the honour of families is protected by his professional discretion. The Physician supersedes the Confessor. To sum up:—He assists at our birth; during life we are never sure to be able to dispense with his aid: thus, next to the happiness of being constantly in good health, there is no greater in the world than that of having a good Physician.







THE ATTORNEY.

BY ALTAROCHE.



IT might seem, at first sight, that the French Attorney exercises one of those patent professions which can be known and understood by such of the public at large as will merely take the trouble to look and listen. This supposition is the more natural, as the profession is created and regulated by the law, which everybody is supposed to know. Such, however, is not the case, at least in Paris. There, the Attorney is not the slave of the legal text, but rather the proprietor, with all the proprietary rights of use and abuse. We might almost say, considering the animosity with which he tortures it, that he is its executioner. The country Attorney has simply to follow set forms; the Paris Attorney is compelled to invent and imagine: hence the mysteries of his offices, and of his private audience-room, which, nevertheless, are in some sort public places, though as much unknown to the world as are the green-room and side-slips of a theatre to the gaping countryman in the gallery.

The Parisian Attorney's age ranges between twenty-eight and forty-five years: he is generally a head clerk, who, after having run through the various grades from junior clerk to the enjoyment of the functions of president of the office, finally purchases an attorneyship for himself. This position cannot be attained before the aspirant has completed his twenty-eighth year,—a noviciate of between ten and fifteen years being necessary to pass from the rush-bottomed chairs of the office to the leathern arm-chair of the study: hence the Paris Attorney, who does not take up his arms—pens, we mean—till he is sixteen or seventeen years of age, is always at least eight-and-twenty when he takes the oaths.

An attorneyship in Paris is not a possession for life, but merely a transitory employment. It is only in the country that a man dies an attorney. In Paris, an attorney's office is a kind of park preserve, well laid out, abounding with game, in which it is necessary to purchase a license to hunt for fortune. His game-bags being well filled, the sportsman resigns his snares and the key to the first comer. The license is generally held for about twelve years. In other words, after that term of practice, the Attorney begins to feel that there would be no impropriety in indulging himself with the charms of gilded—richly-gilded—retirement: thus the Parisian Attorney's age scarcely ever exceeds forty or forty-five years.

There are still a few obstinate persons in the world who persist in regarding the Attorney of the present day as a faithful emanation of the ex-Procureur. This is a mistake: nothing can be farther removed from the Procureur of former times than the Attorney of to-day. Another and more numerous class, misled by M. Scribe's vaudevilles, imagine that the Paris Attorney is a fashionable dandy, who, from the box of his tilbury, eclipses his clients in the street; is seen in the evening in the balcony of the Bouffes, or at the Opera; stakes five hundred francs at écarté, and galopades with graceful enthusiasm. This, also, is a mistake: the Parisian Attorney savours no more of the "Chicaneau" of the *ancien régime* than of the lions of the Jockey Club, or the young dandies of the Gymnase.

There are two distinctly marked phases in the life of the Paris Attorney; and his personal appearance is modified according to his ascendency in one or the other of these,—as bachelor or married man.

We have seen that, after having for a longer or shorter period occupied the backed stool as head clerk, the neophyte most commonly buys an attorneyship on his own account.* At the conclusion of his bargain, he is generally without a penny; or, if he has saved anything out of his narrow earnings, or his family property, it is seldom more than enough to pay the first instalment of the price of his office. How must the remainder be raised?—Simply, by a good marriage.

The head clerk buys an attorneyship in order to marry; the Attorney marries in order to raise the expenses of commencing a chace after fortune.

Now it is that the Attorney is perfumed, pomaded, laced, and wears his hair curled; now that he patronizes boots by Sakoski, and coats by Humann; now pirouettes he gracefully into drawing-rooms, pays his court to charming mammas, caresses lap-dogs, thrums on the guitar, and makes himself indispensable to young ladies by his earnest invitations to quadrille, or to read the last new poem,—a task, the bitterness of which his glass of *eau sucrée* hardly suffices to conceal. In a word, he neglects not one of the thousand and one recipes in use among expectant wife-hunters.

But this episode in the Attorney's life lasts at most only a few months: he soon suits himself; for, with only five hundred francs in his cash-box, he is always an eligible match.

His marriage concluded, and the price of his office paid, the Attorney casts his slough, and becomes another man. He now wears a plain cravat with a slovenly tie; orders his boots at the bootmaker's at the corner of his street; and one of his clients,

* The number of Attorneys is limited in Paris, and every nomination must have the sanction of the Government.

a tailor, supplies him with coats and unmentionables thirty per cent. under the prices of fashionable tailors. In a word, to the elegant succeeds the solid. With the Attorney, all is black,—coat, boots, and pantaloons; his cravat only is of white cambric.

Adieu to the Bois de Boulogne, and the Café Anglais! The married Attorney no longer walks for pleasure, but on business only; he no longer breakfasts, dines, or sups: he takes his meals at home.

Of all his former luxuries, he retains only his morning-gown and slippers; and these only because they are indispensable accessories to the ensemble of a Parisian attorney's office. The morning-gown and slippers are, in some sort, the uniform of the Attorney while enthroned in his sanctum in the exercise of his calling. The Attorney monopolizes these two articles of dress: one never sees a clerk, not even a head clerk, in a morning-gown, even of simple calico, or with his feet encased in slippers. These are, by special prerogative, the Attorney's; and we live in a time when the pettiest dignitary is jealously tenacious of his prerogative, even to ridicule, which is the common prerogative of all.

But if the Paris Attorney is rather negligent than neat in his attire, his private room, to make amends, is furnished and fitted up with great expense and elegance. This is not to make work less disagreeable, or more attractive: it is simply another calculation on the part of our Attorney. A luxuriously-furnished study is of the same use to the Parisian Attorney, with regard to his clients, as were his fashionable dress and habits when on the look-out for a wife.

This magnificence of the audience-room is still more striking by contrast with the humility,—we might even say, without exaggeration, the meanness of the office. This, however, is not without its wherefore. The Attorney adopts the principle employed in panoramas, where the spectator is led through dark passages, in order that his eye may at last repose with greater pleasure on the artfully-combined light thrown on the picture. His chambers are therefore always so arranged that the client must pass through the office to reach the principal's study. This is a contrivance which has been hereditary in the race of Paris Attorneys from time immemorial.

The Parisian Attorney is habitually an early riser: he is out of bed by eight o'clock, and installed in his closet by ten at the latest. In the summer, he sleeps out of town; for the Attorney almost always owns, or hires, a country house, where he sojourns from Saturday night till Tuesday morning,—the Paris Attorney, like some classes of mechanics, generally keeping Monday as a holiday.

In winter, he passes from his bedroom to his study. The doors are opened by ten o'clock, when the clients, who have been waiting in the office from nine, are ushered into the sanctuary. In the course of the interview that ensues, the Attorney of course talks to his client of his cause, which was the object for which the latter sought his presence; but, so to speak, this is only a pretext. After a few technical expressions relative to the cause—with which, however, he is unacquainted, and of which he has only learnt a summary by heart—the Attorney commences a conversation on indifferent topics. He possesses a marvellous talent for captivating his interlocutor's attention; he amuses, interests, and finally turns him to his purpose. In short, when the Attorney has managed to place himself on good terms with a

wealthy litigant, he makes of him a constant visitor at his home, or rather at his office. In every attorney's office in Paris, there exists a circle of loungers, who go to their attorney as one would go to the Public Library or the Zoological Gardens. The call forms part of their daily routine of business. They would miss the half-hour's gossip with the Attorney as much as an omitted call at the accustomed café. The day would be incomplete; a point of memory would be lost: "Use is second nature." It is well understood that these honest persons would be loth to disturb, without remunerating, their Attorney,—without offering him some better compensation than the charm of their society.

The case which brought them into contact with the man of the law is at last terminated, but the intercourse it has created seldom fails to survive. Then the client makes it a case of conscience to bring about another lawsuit, which in some sort justifies his calls. At first, he sought an Attorney to manage his suit; now he looks out for a lawsuit to maintain his intimacy with his Attorney. This attachment of the client is one of the Attorney's greatest triumphs.

But the Attorney does not always confine himself to assuring the management for life, and sometimes even after death, of all his client's lawsuits. He contrives, besides, to obtain his confidence: initiated, of necessity, into a knowledge of part of his affairs, it is not long before he learns all. Then he gives his officious advice; and, in addition to his public functions, offers his private services in all difficult or delicate matters. Has the client money to invest?*—The Attorney will undertake to find an advantageous investment. Or does he, on the contrary, want to borrow?—The Attorney will procure the necessary sum. In brief, step by step, the Attorney worms himself completely into his client's confidence, and becomes manager of his temporal interests. We need not add that he levies a handsome per-centage by way of premium, as a matter of course. The labourer is worthy of his hire; and the Parisian Attorney generally gives himself a world of labour.

In this manner, the Attorney's sanctum provides at once for the Attorney, and for his office. These marvellous results are due to the insinuating eloquence of the legal practitioner; and hence the gift of eloquence is one of the Parisian Attorney's essential qualifications, and the talent for small talk is no less necessary to him than to the fashionable hair-dresser.

An hour or two for the reception of clients, a quarter of an hour for signatures, and half an hour devoted to instructing the head clerk, constitute our Attorney's official day. Perhaps it would be as well to include three quarters of an hour for the perusal of the papers. The Paris Attorney, on account of the low price, subscribes to the *Siècle*, or to the *Presse*, according to his shade of politics; to the *Droit*, or the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, on account of his profession; and to the *Petites Affiches*, for the sake of the legal advertisements. He receives the *Affiches Parisiennes*, in his quality of shareholder.

Grave and anti-epicurean as he seems, the Parisian Attorney is not, however, a systematic enemy to the enjoyments of this life: he occasionally gives a rout in his apartments, and gets up a waltz and quadrille party in his drawing-room. But the lawyer's nail never fails to fret a hole in the Amphitryon's glove: with the Attorney, pleasure is only a part of, and not a departure from, his system; and the ball is only

* Conveyancing business belongs legally, in France, to the Notary, and not to the Attorney.

another of his baits. It is a periodical assumption of politeness, put on to preserve the remembrance of barristers whose assistance may be useful, and magistrates whose acquaintance is desirable. The Attorney even asks to his parties his principal clients, who fail not to accept the invitation, and hasten to moisten their lips with the water for which they themselves provided the sugar, and to dance to the music of violins of which they have furnished the strings.

Will it be believed that these balls are dreaded by the clerks in the office, who behold their arrival with more terror than a night on which they have to do duty as National Guards? The scene of their labours is only changed, for a few hours, into the drawing-room. The Attorney has to recruit as many dancers as possible; and to the strangers rightfully belong the fair and youthful partners. In virtue of his right as their principal, the Attorney commits to his clerks the duty of cavaliering the ancient dowagers, advocates' dames on the decline, and clients' ladies in the autumn of their existence,—in a word, all the superannuated lady aspirants who covet the excitement of the quadrille. The wretched clerks drag the clog thus imposed on them the whole night. Slaves of the ball, they are never liberated before five in the morning.

From what has been said of the distribution of his day, it will be seen that the Attorney exercises the calling of business agent, rather than that of a real attorney. The office is only an accessory, if not in his budget, at least in the division of his personal work. The business of his office is conducted under, or rather apart from, the Attorney's management, as follows:—

The management is vested in the head clerk, who is more of a lawyer than the principal himself. The second clerk superintends the common-law department, under the immediate instructions of his superior. The third clerk attends at the courts. It is his duty to get the files examined and signed, to engross the causes, to answer appeals of audience, and to procure delays. He is also the necessary messenger between the office and the barrister—in a word, he is the Attorney's ambassador at the courts.

After these officials, come one or several law-students, who have been placed by their friends in an Attorney's office, as much to employ their short leisure, as to perfect them in the law and its practice. These amateur clerks receive no salary, and their services correspond to their remuneration. Their employment in the office consists in writing vaudevilles destined to be refused by the Folies Dramatiques, or love-letters to the milliner's girls round the corner.

Come we to the junior clerk, called in profane parlance the "saute-ruisseau," and, professionally, the "petit-clerc." He it is who runs on errands for the office. Generally, he is a youth from fifteen to eighteen years of age; though sometimes, notwithstanding his appellation of "petit-clerc," he is a good big boy. We knew one "petit-clerc," who must have been at least thirty years of age.

An Attorney's office produces from twenty-five to eighty thousand francs per annum, the average annual net produce being about fifty thousand francs. It is, however, admitted, that if the practice from which the Attorney nets fifty thousand francs were managed as are most country practices, it would not produce more than twenty thousand francs at most, even after the Paris tariff.*

* In Paris the costs are taxed higher than in the country.

Whence this enormous difference?

The country Attorney—we mean the straight-forward and upright one—only reckons as his costs out of pocket the sums actually expended by him from his own purse. With regard to his fees, that is to say, the price of the work done in his office, they are strictly regulated by the trouble which the business requires. With the Paris Attorney, it is widely different.

On one hand, there is no expenditure but that which is real and necessary; and on the other, there figure among the emoluments articles of which the bare designation would strike with astonishment the provincial Attorney (we still mean the straight-forward and honest one).

In his summary, the Parisian Attorney complicates the proceedings as much as possible, while the country Attorney generally tries to simplify them. To attain his end, the provincial Attorney takes the shortest way, while the Paris Attorney makes a long detour, well knowing that to him the road is not sown with thorns and flints. He introduces the utmost possible number of pleadings into the same cause; he crowds proceeding upon proceeding, suit upon suit. He not only goes through all the formalities necessary to the affair in hand, but complicates it in every way that the law directly or indirectly authorizes. In a word, his talent consists in extracting from a suit all that is legally possible, and in making every squeeze advantageous to himself.

It would be an easy task to enumerate a host of instances that call into operation the most profound ingenuity and the most incontestable address. The request, as part and parcel of all lawsuits, and the *licitation* (sale of indivisible property), as a subject of special proceedings, occupying the most prominent place in the Attorney's case at issue, at once suggest themselves to our mind.

The request (*requête*) is an anticipatory pleading, in which are set forth the means of defence. The attorney for the defence supplies a copy of it to each of his adversaries. This is one of the most pregnant acts of the procedure; for the Attorney takes care to be well paid for drawing up the original, and the law taxes rather highly the right of copying.

Be it known unto all Men that there are divers ways to swell the profit of the request. We do not allude to the method that consists in inserting only eighteen lines on a page in the copies, and seven syllables in each line, although the rules for legal folios exact twenty-five lines a page and fifteen syllables a line: this is a professional peccadillo of ancient standing, from which the country Attorney is no more exempt than his more learned Parisian brother; nor is it, considering all things, worth mentioning. But it not unfrequently happens, that the Attorney and his clerks have neglected to prepare the request in proper time, and the eve of the day appointed for hearing the cause suddenly arrives, without this most essential part of the business having been performed. An opportunity for a request must not, however, be thus sacrificed. The contingency is met in the following manner.

There not being time to transcribe an entire process, the Attorney is fain to serve his opponent with some sheets of stamped paper, the first and last pages containing the beginning and end of a request; and the remainder being old law MSS.

Sometimes, when the second clerk has stitched his sheets, the number of which he regulates according to the importance of the case, the head clerk, or the principal,

taking the roll in his hand, observes, "Fifty folios, only! This case will stand at least seventy-five." And thereupon the additional folios of old papers are inserted in the middle of the roll; nor does this proceeding prevent the process from being charged in the bill of costs, as if it were completely genuine and true.

The Attorney for the opposing party, on whom the request has been served, detaches the first and last leaves, and returns the intermediate ones to his colleague, to serve for the same purpose a second, third, and fourth time, until the folios or the thread be worn out. We know an office where the same MSS. have been in use upwards of five years, and have yielded a net profit of nearly six thousand francs.

The *licitation* is the legal sale of an estate that cannot be divided. For instance, a house in Paris descends in heritage to two brothers. It being impossible to divide it into two portions, the brothers apply conjointly to an attorney to have it legally sold. In such a case, the Attorney's business would appear to be of the simplest nature. The two parties being agreed, it would only be necessary to procure the assent of the Court to a judgment drawn up by himself, authorizing the *licitation*, or legal sale, after going through the usual forms.

But widely different is the Parisian Attorney's interpretation of his duty. So simple a proceeding would not produce a sufficiently long bill of costs. Our Attorney's way of going to work is as follows:—Having received the written request of the two brothers, who have but one will, one common wish, namely, to sell as soon as possible, and share the proceeds—the Attorney draws up the demand for *licitation* at Peter's request; Paul offers no opposition—far from it. But no matter; our Attorney fictitiously selects for Paul another attorney, and, under the name of this colleague, who kindly lends his signature (such being the custom), serves himself, as Peter's attorney, with a request to hinder the *licitation* in the name of Paul.

The reasoning urged in this process cannot be otherwise than illusory, for a *licitation* is never opposed by the law; therefore, it is only an affair of form, to which no great importance is attached. The second clerk has in store an abundance of consecrated phrases for this fictitious opposition.

In the request that he draws up in the name of the opposing Paul, he says, "You must be aware, and unfortunately, it is an observation but too well-founded, that at the present moment all business is stagnant, in consequence of the existing commercial crisis. Paris, in particular, has especial reason to complain of the sad effects it produces. Time was, when the capitalist sought with avidity for eligible investments in houses; but now that the rage for joint-stock companies has made such rapid advances, complete discredit has fallen on all that does not offer tempting advantages to speculators and stock-jobbers; buyers are therefore at a discount, and houses, no more than land, cannot be disposed of even at the most deteriorated price," &c., &c.

Now comes Peter's turn. Peter replies to Paul's plea by a rejoinder: and the same clerk, after having manufactured the demand, is charged with the reply. He makes Peter speak in such terms as the following:—

"Our opponent is in error, and completely mistaken in his view of the actual state of business. Joint-stock companies have fallen into complete discredit; capital is flowing back into solid and substantial investments, exempt from the risk

and hazard of speculative commerce, and confidence is universal. It would be a difficult task to find a more propitious moment to effect an advantageous sale of houses, landed property," &c., &c.

We need not say that this theme may be varied at will to the same tune, and that, under the pen of the second clerk, similar phrases may be spun out to an indefinite length, so as to produce two voluminous requests. Formulæ, consisting of a certain number of pages each, according to the importance of the *licitation*, are in use. If the property be of small value, the style of the request is rapid and concise as that of Paul Louis Courrier; on the contrary, if the price is considerable, the style of the request is diffuse and inflated as that of Victor Ducange, or Salvandy.

A supposititious exchange of summonses then ensues between Paul and Peter, who, after a certain time, find, to their amazement, that they have unconsciously sustained a formal lawsuit. Singular litigants! who, without the slightest difference of opinion, have contested in the judicial arena till their worthy attorney has exhausted his fictitious combinations.

At last, when it only remains to procure the Court's assent to the judgment, the Attorney, who takes especial care not to submit the ridiculous contest to the appreciation of the Court, draws up the form and has it legalised; and the house being next sold in due course, the Attorney touches the price of the law proceedings.

Such are the ingenious ways by which the Paris Attorney rises to wealth by certain and rapid steps. And let the reader bear in mind that we have only noticed two or three cases, taken, almost at random, from a thousand.

After twelve years' practice, which period is generally sufficient to enable him to save three or four hundred thousand francs, the Attorney sells his attorneyship to a head clerk, who pays almost as much for the right of recommencing, on his own account, in the same fertile field.

Thus our Attorney retires with an annual income of between thirty and forty thousand francs. He continues to reside in Paris in the winter, and in the country in the summer. He is now a man of leisure; he eats, drinks, digests, sleeps, and subscribes to the *Journal des Débats*.

He is an elector, a member of a philanthropical society, and more frequently justice of the peace; he especially courts the last-named functions, which he considers a stepping-stone to the bench. He is invariably decorated with the Legion of Honour, and in every election he is the last candidate on the poll.

This inert and passive life, or rather vegetation, of the retired Attorney, is only disturbed by two accidental crises. Every two months (when he is not reporting captain in the national guard, to which title his former judicial life stands him as qualification), his adjutant summons him, as commanding officer, to the guard-room, where he declaims eloquently against griping speculators and rioters longing for plunder: once every two years, he is summoned as juryman to the court of assize; where, after having incontestably manifested his legal qualifications by addressing a thousand questions to the witness in the box, and in his harangue to his brother jurymen in the jury-room, he finds a verdict against an unhappy wretch who, impelled by hunger and poverty, has broken a pane of glass in a baker's window, and stolen a loaf.





THE FIGURANTE.

BY PHILIBERT AUDEBRAND.



THERE never was a time when the blaze of the foot-lights did not dazzle a multitude of bright French eyes, and turn a multitude of gay French heads. Even if Watteau, the painter of love in idleness, had not left us a few shadowy sketches of the opera nymphs of "auld lang syne"—the gay and graceful rogues who exchanged the solitude of the counter for the enchantments of the stage, yet hardly any one is ignorant that, as long ago as 1770, few girls of the working classes could resist the haunting desire, the exciting fever, which drove them into public, to mix in the glories of the chorus, or the glitter of the ballet. From that day to this the desire and the fever have only grown by what they fed on. No one can wonder at it in Paris especially, where the theatre exercises so large an influence on society—the theatre—the modern theatre, has so many charms, so many resources, so many mighty spells, that it may well fire young hearts with fond ambitions.

'Tis the rosy dream that is for ever hovering over a number of our young Parisian girls. Of those I mean who are born in the porter's lodge, as well as of the merry chatterers, the pretty recluses of the milliner's work-room, who hang all day, like so many Penelopes, over their eternal task of gauze and ribbons. After the labours

of the week, when they return to their garrets, excited by the terrors of a noisy tragedy or a gloomy melodrama, it is that dream which peoples their slumbers, it is that which sits upon their eye-lids, and casts its spell over them. The rich attire, the queen's mantle starred with spangles, the floating tunic of some Greek maid, the silver-laced stomacher, the pearl band in the hair, the ear-rings, the diamond necklace, the topaz-ring, the pure white complexion—(not an actress but may put on that)—the silken sandal,—it is all like fairy-land—and I know not if at such times Shakspeare's Queen Mab does not smile upon the sleepers.

Poor children! they fancy they are applauded—covered with garlands—caressed—the favourites of Paris: they enjoy the longing looks cast after them; they enjoy the beauty for which they are praised. Oh! that the delusion of such dreams would but stop there!—The next day, at their work, as they prattle with the needle and the scissors in their hand, there is not one who cannot repeat some snatch of last night's comedy: there is not one but will take a part in it; one will try her voice; another has caught up an attitude—the boldest of them can recite the whole of that speech which the house applauded so vehemently. Their pastime is a parody, but there is emulation at the bottom of it. Some are for the old school, others for modern declamation. The desire of theatrical success grows on them insensibly—it is fostered by a thousand enchanting fables, whispered from ear to ear, of the incomparable success of the theatrical divinity of the day. Not a girl in Paris has ever forgotten that before Mademoiselle ——— came out at the opera—(and she owed her success to nothing but her beautiful eyes)—she was a milliner; as for Mademoiselle ——— she was nothing but a sempstress; Mademoiselle ——— was, they say, a stage below her, but Mademoiselle ——— was certainly lower still.

The path of these delusions is as slippery as glass when once the foot is upon it. These poor foolish chits may aspire, they think, to anything. After these necessary preliminaries, a few more days suffice to disgust them with the toil of the work-shop. The furbelows are cast aside: the fashions of the month are forgotten: the work-basket is shut up with disdain; and every Sunday, the bird gets out of her cage to enlist from ten in the morning till three, amongst the dramatic recruits of M. Saint Aulaire. There is now no going back—the stage is before her, the part suits her, the piece was made for her, the public of that theatre is more ready to applaud than to blame. Nothing tells her that she is not first-rate in the confidants of Voltaire's tragedies, and in the brazen-tongued handmaidens of Molière. The way lies clear before her—the least trial she can make of her strength is to solicit from a manager the favour of a speedy first appearance: need I add that, without a moment's hesitation, the manager has great pleasure in engaging her—as a figurante.

A Figurante! she never dreamed of such a thing! a Figurante—a mere chorus-woman, condemned to unobserved pirouettes and unheard monosyllables—a bitter cup, if it must be drunk out. Nay! indeed! she must begin somewhere. The figurante of to-night may be prima-donna to-morrow; the thing has happened a hundred times.

Poor girl! will she never cease to hope then? Don't imagine she will make

an effort to advance one step further, humble as her condition is: the part of supernumerary satisfies her desires for a long time.

To comply with the tradition of her caste, the first thing she does is to choose a name as sweet as honey, and as white as milk. The baptism of the theatre shows how important it is to have a good name—indeed, matters have come to such a pass that all the names in the calendar are exhausted. Before she makes a final decision, the Figurante passes in review the names of all the heroines of all the novels she has ever read. She examines, she inquires, she rakes up old recollections, she consults the last new oracle. When all is over, she determines upon Pamela, Maria, Celina, Flora, Indiana, Emma, Lelia, Lucy, Herminia, Heloise,—perhaps she determines upon the whole batch at once. A little later, on some great occasion, when the green-room is on fire with chit-chat, or the side scenes with the last successful debût, her companions will give her a nick-name—Bel-Œil, or Bouche-Rose, or Fine-Oreille—a title to which she must needs learn to answer.

When she first comes out, the Figurante is about seventeen—sometimes more, seldom less. Her first appearance is hailed by a battery of double opera-glasses, raised to decide whether she is light or dark, whether she has good eyes and long eyelashes, or whether she has not some other grace to throw away upon the sultans of the stalls—a roguish mouth, a rounded arm, a taper hand, a small foot—and I know not what treasures besides. She is pretty; so much the better, but that is not enough. All her charms would be of no great use if she is not to be allowed to put them forward. To be good-looking is an excellent reason for succeeding: but to be alive, that is to say, to be gay, alert, taking, with a speaking eye, a good figure, and a pretty leg, is more than a reason for succeeding,—it is certain success. Success for the Figurante, means the privilege of leading the troop—whether it be a bevy of peasant girls round the may-pole, or a frolic of city-maidens on a holiday. To obtain this foremost place, there is no artifice she would not use. All the tricks of women's wit—a brighter shawl, a more smiling mouth, a smaller shoe, an arm more neatly flung a-kimbo, like the handle of an Etruscan vase; an empassioned glance at the stage manager, a little slander about her rival's looks,—a kiss, perhaps, —certainly a good turn—she will do anything or everything if you will but let her go first: nay, she would submit to the judgment of Paris over again; nothing in the whole world could afflict her so much as to fall backwards in successive slips from place to place, till she finds herself the last joint of the tail: at that distance, you know, however pretty the head may be, it is only the head of the tail, out of sight of the public.

A circumstance which is hardly less worthy of observation, is the humility of the Figurante towards the stars of the theatre—I should call it servility, if it were not even more than that—it is fear. A queen, a great coquette, or a tyrant—the crimson train, the wooden sceptre, or the tinsel crown, possess a sovereign power over her. They may use her for any sudden shifts; they may fling on her the burden of an ill-natured caprice, or their resentment for the severity of the public. The Figurante is their toy. They play with her as a school-girl plays with her doll, if they please: there is not a more docile creature in the world. Instead of complaining, she looks upon every teasing they give her as a distinguished honor. In the good old times

of the theatre, just as they were going on the stage, one of the figurantes came to the side-scene radiant with smiles—"What has made you so merry?" said they. —"Ah!" she replied, "'tis very natural, M. Saint Prix has trod on my toe."

The theatrical life of the Figurante at one of the minor theatres is a monotonous routine of village simplicities or city impertinences—for ever jingling the worn-out melody of some superannuated vaudeville, for ever rubbing their hands as they come upon the stage on the everlasting blue or yellow petticoats edged with black velvet. Happy is she whose fate has raised her to share in the splendours of the lyric stage, and to take part in the magnificent pageants of the modern opera! Every art lends its treasure, every Muse bestows her gift, every spell of dramatic genius is wrought upon the audience on those magical evenings when the cheerful melodies of Auber, or the austere grandeur of Meyerbeer, bring upon the stage the passionate ecstacy of Naples, or the terrors of supernatural romance. The Figurante is in the midst of it all! she stands by the side of Masaniello, in her bright Calabrian tire, when the morning of liberty is breaking over the blue waves:—she rushes across the scene in that horrible night of St. Bartholomew, when the harsh clamour of the military band is mingling with the crash of artillery and the jar of the tocsin—when the music of passion is interrupted by the screams of the women and the sublime chant of the martyr. I would fain believe that on such occasions the poor Figurante feels something of her early visions of dramatic art fluttering within her, and that she becomes for a moment a part of those great works of genius—at any rate she has an entirely new dress for the occasion—perhaps she may appear in a new attitude—perhaps that pale young poet who always sits in the second row of the stalls may notice her. Ah! she has hopes that make ample amends for all the trouble of the rehearsals.

Though the Figurante is born in the lower strata of society, it does sometimes happen, I dare scarcely tell you how, that she finds herself suddenly in possession of all that comfort and luxury can lavish upon her. Nothing of all that embellishes the sweet and downy existence of a pretty woman in Paris is then wanting. She has her cachemere shawls, her boas, her casket, her glittering ornaments, her furniture, her britska, her livery, her page,—all that can seduce, all that can enchant her,—she has it all, held on the shortest and most precarious tenure. The days of splendour generally pass as swift as lightning: she has hardly time to forget, for an instant, the humbler garb she used to wear—the red plaid shawl, which she will keep till her dying hour, her black sandals, her gingham frock, her faded satin hat, and her pinchbeck chain. It costs her but little to go back to her poverty—to bid farewell to her prodigal protector. The bird returns to its nest—to free and unbought pleasures—to love's own real dominion! Out upon the servitude of stately dresses! out upon the ornaments which are bought with lies! give her back the little bed, though it be hard, where she slept so well—give her back the old chamber, though it be nearer the stars! she has indeed to shift from the first floor to the fifth over the first landing, about two hundred feet above the level of the Seine. 'Tis rather high: never mind, her foot is light upon the stair, and, thank heaven, she is independent once more; she needs no pity on her free penury. When once she has got back to that little cell, so humble but so neat, she has not far to look

for happiness. Her singing-bird's cage hangs in the corner—a little further you will find a colony of silk-worms, and in the window-seat a world of sweet flowers; here a bunch of roses waving in the sunshine, there a pot of mignionette flinging its fragrance on the air; the red stock, too, with its humble but subtle odour, and the clematis, trailing in festoons about the window, and peeping into the room like a poet's May song. Look a little further!—you will find on that peg a Spanish guitar, to which our poor recluse will hum some melancholy ditty from last year's opera. Yet, as there is nothing in the world so dull as a solitary life, at a certain hour she has somebody to talk to. The angel in a human shape who visits her is, probably, the shopman from the mercer's across the street, but he invariably passes for her cousin, just as it always happens on the stage. But the Figurante is not without other society: besides the dress-maker and the flower-maker of the theatre, she has a round of acquaintance amongst the rising Taglionis and the future Dorvals, who meet to rant and squall together once a fortnight. Then she is on excellent terms with the porter's wife, whom she supplies with unlimited free entrances to the theatre. Visiting cards she does not deal in, but she scrawls on her door with a bit of chalk,—

"Mademoiselle ———, Dramatic Artist, lives here."

Perhaps you have no notion of the very humble remuneration which the talents of the Figurante obtain for her: it is sometimes fifteen sous, sometimes two francs —never more. The Figurante finds that it is not enough to procure necessaries: accordingly, she does not waste an instant of the day—she is as busy as a bee,—notwithstanding the spirit of idleness which lurks in her character, she lends herself to all the labours of the work-woman: she can hem cravats; she can wash them; she can embroider braces; she can put a tassel on a Greek cap for the haberdashers.

It is generally with the savings of these earnings that she starts for her Sunday dinner, and takes the arm of her cousin aforesaid, till they get to the private tables of the Hermitage. The feast of Belshazzar was nothing compared to the luxury of that *téte-à-téte* dinner. They call for an *omelette au rhum*—they laugh and chatter till they have emptied the bottle of Sauterne—their jokes get more and more practical—who knows where they may spend the evening?—at the Montagnes Russes? —I would lay a wager on it.

But no sooner has the Figurante set foot in the sanctuary called the side-scenes, than she is as prudish as an old maid, every time a rash hand approaches her wasp-like waist. Not quite so, indeed, with every one—she is far enough from being so rude to those who hold the keys of dramatic success,—the author. Round him she is for ever winding and turning,—nothing is too good for him; she will fling her arms over his neck, and say, with a look of such archness that I wonder he can resist it,—"My dearest author, do write me a scrap of a part!" Then, if the author hesitates but a little, she eyes him, she cajoles him, she begs like a kitten, she plays upon him a thousand arch sallies:—"Do but this once—I shall die if you don't write me one little part: every day you live, you waste a lapful of charming things on a set of gawkies, who are not worth my little finger. I'll do whatever you

like—speak the word—I obey. Do you want a Bacchanal? here am I. A vampire? I'll do it. A fine lady?—I can play with my fan like a queen.—Empresses and sewing-girls—anything you please—only one little scrap of a part."

But the dragon of the Hesperides was more easily seduced than a successful dramatic author. He is callous to all sorts of emotions, and he taps the suppliant on the cheek with a "Well, my goddess, perhaps I may, I don't know, we shall see!"—and the poor Figurante will catch at these few careless words as if some one had thrown a jewel at her feet. She hoards them like a treasure, she cherishes them as her best hopes. She knows the advantage of not being lost in the crowd—she sighs for a prominent place, and a becoming dress; she sighs for the golden pleasures of her earlier youth. Alas! she sighs in vain. The authors and the public take no more thought about her.

And here we ought in fairness to clear the Figurante from an unjust aspersion—an aspersion which actually accuses her of ingratitude. An ungrateful Figurante! a Figurante not good-natured and good-hearted! What an age we live in—what calumnies we live upon! To say that, as soon as a gleam of happiness shines upon her—she forgets, she abjures, she neglects her father and mother—'tis sheer slander and nothing else! It has been demonstrated over and over again, that she is as full of filial piety as Antigone. She errs, if she err, on the other side. Her father goes on errands for her, and she pays him: her mother brushes her slippers, she pays her: carries her notes, she pays her: acts as her duenna, takes her to the theatre, receives some gentlemen and shows out others,—and the more she does, the more she is paid. Nobody can doubt that such things are not done for nothing.

Who can say that the Figurante is ungrateful? Whoever had been with me one night at the opera last winter would have been convinced of the contrary. I think they were going to act the *Diable Boiteux*: I was rambling about the lobby, and thence to the side-scenes, when, about half-an-hour before the curtain rose for the first act, a lively altercation sprung up between one of the old women who open the boxes, and a little supernumerary brunette, an arch little beauty, called, if I remember right, "Crane's-foot," from the delicacy of her leg. According to the immemorial custom of the place and the profession, these ladies were telling each other some home truths.

"Crane's-foot," squalled the old woman, "Crane's-foot, I tell you you'll come to a bad end—and 'tis I who tell you so: the least that will happen to you is that you'll die on the scaffold—I'd swear it: you ought to be ashamed of having a cab at the door, and leaving your own flesh and blood splashing about in the mud. You've your fill of every thing, and they are as ill off as they can be. What does that respectable father of yours do, pray? He sells checks in the street—and the mother who suckled you, goes out as a charwoman."

"Hold your tongue there," screamed Crane's-foot, "that is a word or two too much. What business have you to say that I don't do my father and mother a good turn when I can: my father has not a word to say; the little old fellow is as happy as a gold fish in glass globe; he has as much snuff as he chooses, and I dress him up like a tiger whenever the Viscount drives me to the park. D'ye doubt it?—he shall show you his yellow plush livery. As for my mother—that's another thing, she

lives with me, and God forgive me! if she *will* take care of my housekeeeping, can I help it—a dear old soul!"

Who but the Figurante's mother ever believed that her daughter's face would win an admirer from every stall in the pit?—who fancied that to speculate in her daughter's follies was but to indulge her natural freaks of merriment?—and yet who but the mother of the Figurante watches with any touch of natural feeling her unhonored and unloved career? In the whole existence she has to lead, there is no more sentiment than you would find at the bottom of a rouge-pot. She lives the life of a jaded mill-horse, kept to turn the wheel of public pleasure—and only stimulated by a little vanity and a little coquetry. Where is she to look for a nurse when she is ill, or an ally when she is affronted, but to her old wizened mother? in return for all this, the mamma has a few perquisites in the establishment—a few presents now and then, and the certain reversion of old gloves (which she knows how to clean,) old gowns (which she knows how to restore), old lace and ribbons, which may be refreshed, and old slippers, which she will tread down into the easiest of easy shoes: and besides all this, the little trifles which are not wholly valueless—the pins, the brooches, the necklaces, of somewhat apocryphal gold; the smelling-bottles, the Sèvres saucers, the perfumery, and the little instruments which are used to repair dilapidated beauty, or to restore departing youth—the scattered relics which may serve to fill a pedlar's pack with woman's finery.

But, with all these resources, the time is creeping on, when our poor Figurante will find herself alone and in poverty—or with nothing but the slender wealth of faded good looks. The time is come, when, whether she will or not, she must needs resign herself to obscurity and to oblivion. Applause will come to her at most as often as leap-year comes: and nothing short of the approach of a comet can presage the portentous fact that she is about to appear in some new dumb-show part—one of those valuable characters, known under the name of indispensable supernumeraries. In fact, the Figurante can do nothing but figure. The time of her wretchedness is striding upon her. An illustrious philosopher once remarked, that the vicissitudes of all sovereignty and dominion are written down in the great book of human destiny—the dominion of beauty as well as the dominion of genius—of folly as well as of wisdom. Nothing is more true. The time comes which wears the gilding off the throne, and plucks the sceptre from the grasp that held it. The reign of the Figurante must have an end; it cannot last for ever. She may frolic like a fairy on the wing, but her seventh lustre sounds from the dial of time, and she sinks under the irreparable encroachments of years. She undergoes an entire change: you knew her when she was petulant, but now she is sad and cross, and full of heavy thoughts. All the charm of her life was in its past—and that is gone for ever. Her charming figure is bloated—she grows stout; one person might calculate her volume in cubic feet, another her specific gravity. How dare she go upon the boards?—they would crack with her weight. Her throat has lost its sweet modulations: her lips, if she open them, the smile is changed to a grimace—in a word, she is thirty-five. Thirty-five! that is to say, her cheeks have fallen in, and the dimple of her chin is absorbed in massive wrinkles. The roses are all withered, and there is a network of hard deep lines over her face. She is thirty-five—she is come

to the age when the Figurante leaves the stage, and she leaves it, as she came to it, unobserved, uncared-for, unattended. After having spent the better years of her life in this vain chace of wealth and fame,—after having wasted, like a fool, all the opportunities of securing her condition which she ought to have embraced, she bids adieu to the stage, and leaves no trace behind her. She may then wait upon some fashionable actress, or become a candidate for the office of box-keeper in a second-rate theatre. But in the one condition or in the other, she receives some consolation under the chances of her life in relating them to a little circle of companions in misfortune, and in learning, by heart, all the novels of Paul de Koch.





THE VIRTUOSO.



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BY COMTE HORACE DE VIEL-CASTEL.



ADJACENT to the "Bourse,"—that splendid edifice raised by the genius of modern architects—with the assistance of Greek patterns, and numerous masons and stone-cutters, stands a smaller building, which might be easily taken for a tenement of trivial importance, did not large placards inform you that it is the Auction Mart, frequented by the public brokers. In that place, sacred to the Company of Auctioneers, everything is put up to be bid for, everything is to be sold—from travelling-carriages down to the autograph letters of Ninon de l'Enclos. Morning and evening the Auction Mart is open to the public; every one may inspect the articles to be disposed of; all are at liberty to crowd round the desks of the brokers, and indulge themselves in the pleasure of augmenting, by a few francs or centimes only, the marketable value of the greatest, as well as of the most insignificant reputation possessed by artists, statesmen, or simple mechanics.

It is in the Auction Mart that we meet with those isolated characters—those really remarkable individuals of the present age, who alone possess a certain originality peculiar to themselves, and who alone disdain to mix with the common herd, in order that they may seek those paths, the grass of which is untrodden by the feet of the multitude. These remarkable beings are the lovers of virtû—and by this phrase I mean to embrace all those whom a passion for antiquarian research, and a desire to obtain a collection or museum more or less considerable, of things fabricated by human industry, or formed by the supernal energies of the great

Creator, have launched into an arena where the victims of a ruling predilection are in a constant state of agitation.

Many a time have I been tempted to make a collection myself; and, without having precisely succumbed to the strength of the inducement, I must confess that I have often brought the intoxicating cup near enough to my lips to imbibe its sweets, and be initiated in its most secret mysteries. I have examined—ransacked—scrutinized—and observed the Auction Mart from the cellar to the garret—from the broker himself (that monarch puffed up with pride, infallible as the Pope, and affecting, like the marquises represented on the French stage, to know everything without having learnt a tittle) to the porters with their silver badges—those servile dependents on their mighty masters.

I have known and seen the votaries of *virtû* themselves; I have surprised their habits and their manners in the very fact of their originality; and my mind is filled with reminiscences, which I am now about to embody in the form of revelation.

As it is necessary to proceed methodically in all things, I shall begin by stating that there are three kinds—three species of antiquaries.

The first is the Virtuoso whose appearance is wild and uncultured, dirty and ragged from head to foot, with black nails, unshaven beard, uncombed hair, battered hat, and capacious pockets always full. This is the true Virtuoso—the antiquary who collects for the sake of the collection.

The second class comprises those merchants who move in good society—those dealers in curiosities—those tradesmen whose servants wear laced liveries, and whose carriages are haply adorned with armorial bearings—whose manners, language, and habits, are those of the true Virtuoso, but who only disburse their money for the sake of large gains.

The third species is the fashionable Virtuoso—he who constitutes himself a Virtuoso, in order to keep pace with the age, and possess, like his acquaintances, a drawing-room fitted up in the style of the times of Louis XV., a dressing-room in the fashion of the *Renaissance*, a dining-room of the fourteenth century, with some Toledo blades, a few shields, the morion of a Covenanter, a cup in which he drinks when with his friends, a few Flemish jugs in blue and grey earthenware, and three Gothic windows which intercept the rays of the sun, and only admit through the casement a yellow, red, or blue light, that confers upon his features the hue of a yellow-fever, scarlatina, or cholera morbus, should he only place himself in the way of the sunbeam which falls, thus disguised, upon his arm-chair!

Every Virtuoso must necessarily belong to one of the three classes which I have just described:—the Eccentric Virtuoso, the Speculating Virtuoso, and the Fashionable Virtuoso.

Amongst the votaries of the first class—those true poets of their kind—the most celebrated is an old man, dry, wrinkled, shabby, slovenly dressed in a species of brownish great-coat, with his head covered by a black silk skull-cap, above which bulges out an enormous hat, of dubious colour, greasy about the brim, greasy in the crown, greasy in the band, greasy inside, greasy all over. This hat for the last thirty years has regularly accompanied its master to all the auctions, and attends upon him, whatever be the state of the weather, in his walks on the quays, and to the houses of all the dealers in rubbish and curiosities. This hat and this man are

known by the name of De Menussard. M. de Menussard possesses a most splendid collection of Sèvres porcelain, made of *soft clay*. At his house—in his cupboards, in his closets, in his boxes, are concealed, as it were in a tomb, whole sets, trays-full, and vases of Sèvres porcelain, made of *soft clay*, with the ground or borders of deep blue, light blue, turquoise blue, emerald green, or pink. After two years of research, perseverance, and anxiety, he bid for an emerald-green dinner-service which had belonged to the Prince de Rohan, and purchased it at the public auction-rooms on the Place de la Bourse, for 30,000 francs. A little tray of a dark-blue colour, containing five cups and saucers, and bearing the initials and escutcheons of King Louis XV., did not cost him less than 12,000 francs. It is, however, necessary to observe, that each of the cups and saucers of that tray was ornamented with medallions, upon which were portraits of the principal mistresses of the French Sardanapalus. Two vases, which had belonged to Madame du Barri, were also the objects of his most anxious solicitude and most persevering cares. These two vases, of a pale pink, surrounded by volutes and foliage skilfully gilded with gold of two colours, and interspersed with victorious Cupids, after designs by the celebrated Boucher, were in the possession of an old Marquis of Toulouse, to whom they had accrued no one knows how: they might have been a love-token; I cannot say. At all events, the old Marquis of Toulouse would not part with them, and M. de Menussard longed to call them his own. He tendered an exorbitant price, and was refused; he endeavoured to have them stolen for him, and failed in that attempt also. For two years, there was a species of smothered warfare between the Marquis and M. de Menussard,—active and offensive on one side, and defensive on the other.

M. de Menussard is rich, well-educated, and well-born: he lives alone, shut up with his china-ware. He has neither carriages nor livery-servants: an old female acts as his housekeeper. His toilet, his food, and his lodging, cost him but little. He never goes to the theatre; he has no friend; he has never been known to keep a mistress; and he has never travelled farther than Sèvres. Nor to Sèvres has he journeyed more than once; and then he returned home on foot, fatigued, muddy, wet by the rain to the very skin, furious against the manufactory at Sèvres, against the age itself, and exclaiming, with indignation, "There is neither religion nor creed now upon earth!—everything is destroyed!—a decline—a total decline!—To think that one of the glories of France has been suffered to fall into decay!—The barbarians—the Goths—the Visigoths—not to manufacture anything more of *soft clay!* Hard clay—nothing but hard clay!—It is enough to make the hair stand upon one's head!" From that day, does any one dare to speak to him about the modern Sèvres porcelain, he shrugs up his shoulders, and a bitter smile plays upon his lips; but he does not utter a single word! The soft clay is everything to him. When he cannot leave his lodgings, when the shops where curiosities are sold are closed, or when there is no auction to take place throughout Paris, it is then that M. de Menussard shuts himself up in the most secluded of his apartments. One by one he extracts from their cupboards, from their boxes, all his beautiful china, his plates, his dishes, his blue, pink, or green cups, or those with nosegays, medallions, or of a white or coloured ground: he contemplates them with admiration and with tenderness. Armed with a soft and fine piece of flannel, he wipes, he polishes, he

caresses them: and then, when their toilet is thus completed, he talks to them, he converses with them, he questions them.

"You are now quite fine," says he, apostrophising his blue cups; "you are now quite fine, little coquettes! Yes, you carry about you the charming portraits of the most lovely women of your youthful days. King Louis XV. was determined that you should be decorated with the likenesses of his cherished mistresses; and certainly he would not have confided such adorable countenances to *hard clay!* O no! It required all the fineness—all the unctuous nature—all the softness of your delicate clay, my dear little coquettes!—to receive, in a becoming manner, the delicious visage of Madame de Chateauroux, the not less graceful one of the Marquise de Pompadour, and the sweet, sprightly, and vivacious features of the Marquise du Barri."

Thus shut up, thus apostrophising, and thus disporting with his beautiful porcelain, M. de Menussard is the happiest of men. He falls upon his knees before it—he adores it—he loves it with the utmost tenderness; and, more enthusiastic, more poetic than Pygmalion, he does not wish to animate his Galatea. He does not discover a fault about her: to animate would be to despoil her—to deprive her of some charm! His Galatea will never grow old; women painted upon cups will be for ever young; the nosegays on the vases and plates will remain eternally fresh and verdant; nothing of all that will experience the snows of age; the future will be even as the present. When Pygmalion, blinded by his enthusiasm, implored the gods to invest with life the worshipped object of his love, he created for it, at the same time, age, wrinkles, hoary locks, and death! M. de Menussard's joy exists in the insensibility of his mistress,—in the materiality of his idealisation. He creates for her all the graces which he wishes to recognize about her; he testifies for her an impassioned love, which he also fills up with sacrifices; he casts down, as a befitting holocaust to his *soft clay*, first (it is scarcely necessary to name the primal offerings) the hard clay, its sister, and the Queen's porcelain, its cousin; and then follow the old Japanese, the old Chinese, and the old Saxe specimens, even to the admirable earthenware of Bernard de Palissy, the Italian workmanship of Faënza, with their rich paintings and their decorations after Raphael,—yes, even to the Delf-ware bas-reliefs of Lucas della Robbia!

He only knows one thing—only loves, adores, cherishes one object—and that is the *soft clay* of Sèvres. The rest of the world may fall in, crumble, and he would not pay attention to the ruins. He never reads a newspaper; he is not an elector; does not belong to the National Guard, nor to anything of that kind;—he is the admirer of the *soft clay* of Sèvres. This passion for collecting curiosities—this mania—this idolatry of the *soft clay* of Sèvres—have exiled, as it were, M. de Menussard from the rest of the human species, from his fellow-creatures, and from all mundane sentiments: they have rendered him selfish, stern, and inflexible in his resolutions, and miserly in everything, save the purchase of the *soft clay* of Sèvres. He entertains no compassion for the poor: the recital of a great misfortune extracts not a tear from his eye. He would see a whole quarter of the town burning before he would stir an inch from his own door, or suffer himself to experience the slightest emotion at the catastrophe; but if one of his cups, one of his plates, or one of his vases were to break, his lashes would be bathed in tears; groans and complaints would escape from his bosom; he would find in his heart a mine of poetic treasure

to deplore the loss of his cup, his plate, or his vase; and he would be lost in astonishment were the rest of the world to remain insensible to his anguish. He would be capable of killing the man that should break the smallest particle of his possessions in *soft clay*. In fine, he would traverse conflagrations, purgatories, and the regions of the damned, to save the smallest saucer of *soft clay* that might be in danger of destruction; and he would not put his feet into water to save a drowning child! Love is a passion which renders ferocious those who experience it. M. de Menussard, with his black silk skull-cap, his greasy hat, his shabby coat, his upright and tarnished hair, his beard but indifferently cared for, his hands chilled by perpetual contact with earthenware, and his worn-out shoes, is perhaps, of all lovers and admirers of this age, the most fervent, the most sincere, the most true, the most enthusiastic, and, on that account, the most excusable in his selfishness and ferocity.

By the side of M. de Menussard may invariably be encountered, at the Auction Mart on the Place de la Bourse, a celebrated collector of autographs, who possesses the writing of all famous personages: but within the last month, he has laboured under a mortal affliction,—ten lines of Molière's own writing escaped him, and became the property of a celebrated English amateur. He will not recover the shock; his days are numbered; he hears nothing—sees nothing, but walks about like a miserable wretch on whom some inveterate fatality is heavily weighing. He considers himself as a dishonoured individual: his collection of autographs was once reputed to be the finest of all collections existing, and now it is only the second in rank.

M. de Menussard shrugs up his shoulders when he sees the collector of autographs: he even says that he is mad.

And, indeed, the Virtuoso in autographs, like the Virtuoso in *soft clay*, the Virtuoso in pictures, and all other amateurs, who carry their love of one thing to the passion of collecting thousands of specimens of the adored object, may be easily classed amongst the insane portions of those afflicted with monomania. They are harnessed to a single idea, and see nothing beyond it; for all the universe, and existence itself, are concentrated in the one idea which they pursue, and are pursued by.

There are unknown collectors of every kind, and of every species. All Paris must remember that celebrated Viscount who made a collection of the most famous red hair, and pretended to have in his possession some of the locks of Jesus Christ.

Another subject to the monomania of making collections, and who was laughed at by all the world, amassed a complete museum of the smallest female shoes that it was possible for him to procure. They might be seen at his house, arranged upon shelves, and ticketed like volumes in a library. He was acquainted with all living and all dead feet: a handsome foot, with a neat shoe, transported him with admiration. He would consider himself a neglectful guardian were he not to know the female who possessed that pretty foot: he would make all manner of inquiries concerning her; would write to her, to put her in the way of preserving her charming foot; would implore her not to use shoes too tight for her; would point out the species of leather she should order her shoemaker to use for her; and would conclude by soliciting, as the sole recompense for so much trouble, a pair of shoes for his collection—his museum—his treasury!

Lord D—— loves nothing but snuff-boxes: he has a quantity of all kinds, and each is exceedingly precious. He has divided them into three classes: the boxes

of celebrated men, the boxes ornamented with images or paintings, and the boxes of curious materials or workmanship. He has sacrificed considerable sums to this really remarkable collection. He boasts with pride of being able to exhibit to the curious in such matters six real *Blarembergs*,—more than the number possessed by the late King of England, George IV., who was particularly fond of snuff-boxes and of *Blarembergs*. His collection of *Petitots* is almost as fine as that of the King of France; and all his *Petitots* have retained their original settings, of the latter years of Louis XIV.,—a period when they were incrusted in snuff-boxes, which served as royal presents. The late M. de B——, a great collector of enamels, endeavoured for a long time to persuade Lord D—— to dispose of two little enamellings of Limoges, of a certain epoch, and faultless in design, which adorned a small snuff-box that was reputed to have belonged to M. Abel Poisson, the brother of the Marquise de Pompadour, and superintendent of finances in the reign of Louis XV.: but Lord D—— never disposes of, nor exchanges, a single thing. His entire collection of snuff-boxes is contained in a case which travels, dwells, and sleeps, if not absolutely *with*, at least *near* him. Lord D—— has undertaken two journeys to St. Petersburg to procure the snuff-box which formerly belonged to Catherine the Great, and which served as a species of frame for the portrait of Potemkin. Lord D—— has bequeathed all his snuff-boxes to a grand-nephew, upon the single condition that they are never to be disposed of, and that they should be tended with all the honours and care which they deserve. An annual income of £1000 sterling accompanies this bequest, in order to recompense the legatee for his trouble, and secure a continuation of those luxuries and comforts which the boxes have so great a right to demand.

It would require, not a volume, but many hundreds of volumes, to describe and analyse the different tastes of curiosity-hunters,—to paint in true colours, and depict in a faithful manner, this eccentric class of individuals. These species of Diogenes, shut up in their tubs, demand nothing better of the world than permission to enjoy in freedom the light of their sun—their predilection—their *Vada*—their monomania! One of those happy beings—those lunatics—those martyrs to a single idea—lived five-and-twenty years shut up with mummies; he saw nothing but mummies; and he at length looked upon them as animated creatures, living like the rest of the world, as his neighbours lived. To each had he given a name, by which he knew, caressed, and cherished it. To such a pitch did he carry his folly, that he eventually fell in love with a hideous corpse enveloped in bandages; its countenance wearing a horrible expression; its lips and cheeks black, haggard, faded, and dried up. He pretended that this wretched object was no other than the daughter of Pharaoh II., and that the box which contained it revealed its royal origin and death through the medium of hieroglyphic designs. A meeting of learned men took place; and it was unanimously agreed that the mummy should be elevated to the rank of a royal mummy, and of a sacred mummy. From that moment, the Virtuoso, its master, entertained towards this mummy a greater attachment than for any of her sister mummies. He dreamt of that young princess: he saw her, in his dreams, playing with the waters at the source of the Nile, and followed by the green crocodiles, which she attracted by her sweet voice from the river. Indeed, never did lover adore his mistress as the Virtuoso loved his mummy. For some time, he was scarcely seen: he shut himself up with the

daughter of Pharaoh II., and poured forth his soul in respectful adoration at the feet of her dumb Royal Highness. One morning, after a cold and wet night, the Virtuoso found his mummy lying upon the ground. The sacred bandages were loosened; the form of his beauty appeared to him unveiled for the first time, but broken and spoiled; the fall it had experienced had ground it almost to powder. He endeavoured to raise and re-adjust one upon another the sad remains; but—O horror!—the Virtuoso became suddenly aware that his Egyptian Princess was a man! This was for him a mortal blow—a nameless sorrow: he languished for some time, and died at last, and was interred in the coffin of his loveliest mummy!

Having thus faithfully described the true Virtuoso, it may not be unadvisable to notice the speculating or trafficking Virtuoso, who is a calculator of a certain kind—the disgrace of the fraternity—a horror only equalled by the idea of submitting the art of poetry to mathematical considerations.

The trafficking Virtuoso, at first sight, frequently possesses the same external characteristics as the true Virtuoso. He displays the same ardour in the pursuit of curiosities—the same contempt for anything which does not relate to a collection—the same indifference towards the rest of the creation. He is, however, more energetic, more obstinate, more determined in his language. His costume is that of the learned scholar who is the most deeply attached to his classic dirt: he takes no care of his person—he seems to forget himself, the better to think of nothing but his ruling predilection. He will affect a passion; he will moan after its object: and still that man is only an accomplished actor,—an adroit juggler: his passion, as well as his collection, is only a means to further his views.

Such an individual collects old books for a period of ten years; he has them bound, enriches them with annotations, illustrates them with pictures procured here and there at hazard, and adds to them autographs which God only knows where he has picked up. Upon the fly-leaves left by the binder at the commencement of the volume, he scribbles the biography of the author, and affixes his baptismal and surname, together with his titles, as member of several learned societies, to the title-page. He has a stamp to mark the various books that pass through his hands, and he can tell how many editions such and such a work has gone through: he can also enumerate the dates and the names of the printers of those editions. Little by little, the booksellers and the purchasers of old volumes consider him a celebrated bibliographer; and he writes in some learned journal a dissertation upon Aldus and the Elzevirs. The Society of Bibliopolists receives him into its bosom with acclamations and delight; the Reviews re-echo his name; the foreigner consults him with respect; the Minister of Public Instruction nominates him librarian of one of the public establishments. A few years elapse, and he is elected a member of the Institute; and then no one speaks of him without prefixing to his name, as a well-merited title, the words—"THAT LEARNED MAN OF WHOM FRANCE SHOULD BE PROUD."

Once arrived at this point, the farce is successfully played: the collection is now useless, and the only quackery remaining for him to adopt is the sale! Then will appear those elaborate catalogues, in which mention must be made of all the annotations so profusely scattered through his polished-up and bound books, by the "learned man of whom France should be proud!" The collection will be sold for twenty, thirty, and frequently forty times its original value; and the Virtuoso him-

self will pass in the eyes of the world for an erudite scholar, whose vigils are devoted to scientific pursuits.

Another trafficking Virtuoso will despoil the churches of their relics and stained glass, the libraries of their manuscripts, and the arsenals of their arms. He will pillage, without remorse, all public collections; he will pull down old ruins for the purpose of obtaining a few nails or capitals; wherever he can steal anything, he will plunder for the benefit of his museum. He will be prodigal of his advice to artists; he will obtain honourable mention in the public journals as a distinguished antiquary, who sacrifices everything to his taste for the curiosities of the middle ages, and who wastes, squanders, and dissipates his fortune. A few charitable individuals will speak of putting this madman under restraint: they will pity his wife, his daughter, his grand-daughter, and his grand-children's children. Then, suddenly, on some fine morning, the trafficking Virtuoso, having prepared that which he technically terms "a market," and having, by adroit measures, puffed up the price of his curiosities to the highest value possible, will decide upon disposing of his dear collection—the blood of his veins—the marrow of his bones—the flesh of his body—in fine, his very soul!

This trafficking Virtuoso began making his collection with an income of 6000 francs, and he will leave off operations with more than 40,000, in addition to the reputation of a patron of the arts, and the title of Member of the Society of Antiquaries.

Having thus described the poetic and eccentric Virtuoso, whose occupations are the result of monomania, it only remains for me to speak of the fashionable Virtuoso; but a few words will suffice to depict this personage, who is neither a character, nor a passion, nor anything else, save a being formed by the fashionable world. The Count de Brevailles, the most elegant of fashionable curiosity-hunters, lately showed me in his armoury the sword of Joan of Arc, chased by Benvenuto Cellini, and a few articles of a dinner-service of earthenware, made by the admirable Bernard de Palissy, and bearing the date of 1508, with the initials of Louis XII.

In conclusion, if the Virtuoso be without pretence in his passion, and devoid of affectation in his predilection, he more or less advances towards madness; if he be a speculator, he is a quack; and if he be fashionable, he is nothing. But were I honoured with a seat in the Chamber of Deputies, I would bring in a bill couched in the following manner:—

"Whereas, especially within the last few years, the monuments and specimens of art of this country have, on all sides, and for the sole interests of curiosity-seekers and their collections, been pulled to pieces by degrees, be it enacted, &c.

"Article First and Last.—Every Virtuoso is condemned to the perpetual *surveillance* of the high police."





THE DUCHESS.

THE DUCHESS.

BY M. DE COURCHAMPS.

UNDER the old *régime*, a Duchess was a personage set apart in the social and aristocratic order of things in France,—a distinct species of the female genus,—a star of the first magnitude in the Court firmament. The Duchess had all the honours of the Louvre and the "tabouret*," to say nothing of her title of "well-beloved cousin" of his Majesty, and her privilege of sitting enthroned under a canopy of state, whenever it was her gracious pleasure to grant an audience to her feudal *bailli*, or her fiscal proctors. The Duchess surrounded her state bed with a gilded balustrade; and the roof of her coach was covered with a drapery of crimson velvet, fringed with gold, which hung down at the four corners with tassels of the

* The honours of the "tabouret," or stool, consisted in the right accorded to Duchesses of remaining seated in the presence of the Royal Family of France, upon ceremonial occasions. Certain honours of the *entrées* to the Palaces of the Louvre and Versailles were also reserved to Duchesses.

richest manufacture. The Duchess of Leuxignem (erroneously pronounced and written "Lusignan") was as renowned for the splendour of her carriage draperies as for the stiffness of her stately figure, the gravity of her lordly physiognomy, and the aridity which pervaded her whole figure. The Duchess, moreover, hoisted upon the top of her coat-of-arms, as a sign of her quality, a coronet of nine acanthus leaves, with nine precious stones of different colours in the circlet of the said coronet,—a decoration which never failed to dazzle every passer-by, when the panels of her coach had been blazoned by the Sieur Ouvray, who excelled in the arrangement of heraldic devices, as appears from the principal writers of the time. Ermine was also reserved for ducal personages; for it is as well to remark, that though the Presidents *à mortier* had the presumption to spread a mantle under their coats-of-arms, it was a scandalous innovation; and, after all, these mantlings of the red-robed men of law were never lined with *spotted* ermine; and that, at least, was one point gained for the consolation of the whole band of Duchesses. There was no idea, then, of that Lais of modern times, who has covered the most secret recess of her apartments with a carpet of "spotted" ermine, in all the splendour of a ducal mantle, if we may believe the report of all our young Alcibiades of the day.

Ever since the times of Molière, there have been "fagots" of manifold variety*; but, now-a-days, the diversity to be remarked in "the Duchess" is as sharply defined again, as that which may be found in fagots, chips, or any other bundles of firewood. In order to treat the subject with all due accuracy, it would be as well, perhaps, to commence by dividing and subdividing "the Duchess," like every other organized substance, or subject of natural history,—that is to say, according to the classification of "genus" and "species," and all the other varieties of scientific division. The Duchess of the first class, or primitive genus, is evidently the Duchess of the *ancien régime*; the Duchess of secondary rank is the Duchess of the Restoration; and the Duchess of the Empire, according to our theory, can only be placed upon the third line.

Among the twenty-seven or twenty-eight Duchesses of the *haute noblesse*, there are not more than one or two who have a box at the Italian Opera; there are two or three who visit a theatre once or twice during the Carnival; there are ten or a dozen who never quit their noble quarter of the town,—that peaceable, aristocratic, and virtuous extent of territory, which forms the Faubourg St. Germain, and is comprised between the Rue des Saints Pères, the Rue de Vaugirard, the Esplanade of the Invalids, and the Quai d'Orsay, not to mention here the Quai des Théatins, which some people have chosen to modernize into the Quai Voltaire; and when, towards the end of January, the topic is discussed of a round of visits to be made in the Faubourg St. Honoré, you might almost suppose yourself at the other end of France, and imagine that there was a talk of a voyage to Newfoundland.

There was once upon a time an unhappy Duchess, who was ordered by M. Trousseau, a fashionable "larangipharmacical" doctor of the day, to transport her

* An allusion to the well-known words of Sganarelle, the wood-cutter, in the "Médecin malgré lui" of Molière, "Il y a fagot et fagot." This saying has become a proverb in the French language, in constant use where a distinction is to be drawn in a ludicrous sense.

penates to the Chaussée d'Antin*, because she was threatened with a complaint in the larynx, which rendered it necessary for her to be sheltered from the north wind by the hillock of Montmartre. She had the advantage and comfort of being lodged close by her doctor; but never was woman of quality more completely out of her element, more mortified, and more overwhelmed with all the pains attendant upon a state of ostracism. She died of it at the end of the week, exhausted by grief.

The Duchess of the *ancien régime* is naturally credulous: she hesitates between the famous somnambulist of the Croix Rouge and the modern Æsculapius of the Rue Taranne,—in other words, between magnetism and homœopathy. She expects, also, with much impatience, the year 1840; and to those who are acquainted with the prophecy of St. Randgaire†, there is no reason to explain why.

As to her political opinions, her Grace has not got beyond 1788; and her literary tastes are pretty nearly those of the Regency. Her two favourite authors are still MM. d'Arnauld-Baculard and De Tressan.‡ Her last new-year's-gift to her eldest grandson, who is twenty-nine years old, was a charming copy of "The Trials of Sentiment," followed by "The Idle Hours of a Man of Feeling," richly bound in vellum, with the family coat-of-arms embossed and gilt upon the covers. As she is fully persuaded that Baroness de Staël and Countess de Genlis were, more or less, democrats, she has never chosen to read a single line of their works, and will inform you, if necessary, that "the bare idea is beneath her."

Questions of genealogy, heraldry, and court ceremony, are almost the only topics which are not considered unworthy her attention; and, as may be well supposed, in the presence of a *dévote*, there is no question of ever repeating anecdotes of the nature in fashionable circulation in Parisian society. The good lady is consequently reduced to conversations upon quarterings and chapters, redemptions of lineage, and feudal rights of rendering justice. She is fully aware of the importance and signification of the bar sinister, as well as of "defamation" for an eagle without a beak, or a lion deprived of claws, which, as all the world knows, has always arisen from degradation or forfeiture. For a length of time, she held frequent dissertations upon the imperial eagle of Bonaparte, whose neck had been given a bend *sinister* by the Herald's College of the Revolution,—a circumstance which made of the unlucky eagle a *oiseau contourné*, which, in all true heraldry, signifies bastardy. This was a triumph which she enjoyed, it must be allowed, with an air of infernal malice and satanic delight.

It was about the end of the year 1816, as far as I can recollect, that the Dowager Duchess of Castel-Morand, having had the annoyance of finding herself, at the reception of a Minister of the legitimate King of France, in company with a quantity of those military upstarts whom a brother soldier had tricked out with the title of "Duke," took a most absurd fancy into her head, as she said,—the curiosity to

* The quarter of Paris inhabited chiefly by the rich banking and commercial world, and monied aristocracy of the day.

† The famous legitimist prophecy alluded to is couched in the following terms:—"X. ann. post XXX. ante nativ. Domini prostratum viderat perversum et ultimum usurpatorem. Lilia florescerunt in Gallia."

‡ Two noble and namby-pamby authors of the last century.

know, in fact, what were the real names of those titled plebeians, who had been just authorized by the "Charte" to assume, alas! the same designation as that with which her own family had been decorated by King Louis the Just. Her request was respectfully acceded to: a committee was formed around her; and, with the aid of the Imperial Almanac, means were at last found to affix, with very tolerable accuracy, each of these foreign duchies to its imperial title-holder. "It is perfectly clear," exclaimed her Grace, after a dissertation which lasted for an hour and a half at the least; "and I am now as well informed upon the subject as your Messieurs de Montesquieu* could be. Mortier is Massena; Madame Ney is Elizabeth of Friuli, or of Corinthia, just as one might say Eleonora of Aquitain, or Blanche of Castile; and General Suchet is Montebello. I do not recollect the rest; and I ask to know no more. Many thanks for your kindness and erudition."

Among the Duchesses of the *ancien régime*, it is as well to mention the hereditary Duchess. This variety of the Duchess in expectation is naturally progressive in her tastes and opinions, very generally "Anglomaniat," and almost always a blue-stocking. All her men-servants are powdered, like so many figures of the last century at a masquerade; and he who serves as valet-de-chambre is expected to assume all the airs of a "groom of the chamber." As may be naturally supposed, her daughters have English governesses; and she herself never speaks anything but English, although neither her mother nor her husband knows a word of the language. She can eat nothing, with pleasure, but English dishes, with downright English names, although her husband, who is a thorough Frenchman, would be very glad to see her eat sometimes a *pigeon à la crapaudine*, or a *poulet en fricassé*. His melon, which, in true French fashion, he has always been accustomed to eat after his soup, he never can get before the dessert; and then, to maintain domestic peace, he is obliged to eat it with ginger. His daily soup, also, is prepared *à l'Anglaise*, with pepper and spice; but this excellent husband, although he never fails to groan inwardly at this affliction, never thinks of rebelling. Never was easier-tempered soul invested with ducal honours of the dais and plumed bed-tester!

As soon as this fair lady hears the treble ring of the porter's bell to announce a visit, she snatches up an English paper, of the largest dimensions, to read; and the conversation turns infallibly upon the last Almack's ball, or Prince Louis Napoleon and his dinners, followed up by agreeable and interesting dissertations upon Count d'Orsay's latest fashion, Crockford's, the last bet, steeple-chases, or cock-fighting. When you are not condemned to hear a biographical or literary article from the pen of any English lady-authoress *à la mode*, you may be happy at getting off so well. Never think of complaining; and, above all, never accuse any one, whoever he may be, of "Anglomanie." It is a vile expression, which would be sure to give the most shocking opinion of you. Such a barbarous accusation can only be compared to an act of the most atrocious malice, or the most odious brutality.

It may be easily conceived, that in her Grace's apartments, which are always filled with English ladies, there is plenty of scandal going on; and were I not the thirty-three-thousandth homœopathic particle of "the politest nation in the

* Descendants of one of the most ancient families in France, one of whom became Master of the Ceremonies, and the other Aide-de-Camp, in the Court of Napoleon.

universe," I might hazard the observation, that invariably, in a house full of Englishwomen, there is sure to be no end of mischievous tittle-tattle.

Whenever the Duchess in question takes an airing in the Bois de Boulogne, her carriage is carefully supplied with an inkstand, the best English pens, a writing-case, and some richly-embossed letter-paper; and she has always a mass of pamphlets, books in boards, Keepsakes, Landscape Annuals, and English Reviews, heaped up around her. When she enters any other drawing-room than her own, it not unfrequently occurs that certain dandies mutter between their teeth the appellation of "Blue Stocking;" while their physiognomies, well studied in the present fashionable air of gloomy indifference, receive an unusual degree of animation from their expression of somewhat discourteous mockery. It is, however, due to the illustrious lady upon whom this epithet of "Blue Stocking" is bestowed with more or less of justice and propriety, to add, that her stockings are nevertheless of the usual whiteness; and this is perhaps the only affinity which may be found to subsist between this superior being and women of a common order—between the Duchess who studies Chinese, and the Parisian *Bourgeoise* who reads Paul de Koch.

We must not forget to make especial mention of the Duchess of Blancimiers, with all her political and martial propensities—the enthusiastic royalist—the impetuous and ardent spirit—the lady of high lineage, whose ancestors, seven generations back, were present at the combat of the Thirty Men of Britany, under the chestnut trees of Ploermel, in 1351.* I am not able to tell you whether it was in capacity of *bonne amie*, nurse, nursery-maid, governess, or foster-sister of the young Beaumanoir—for that is a matter of biographical research which I have never been able to explain to my satisfaction. I do not at all contest that she may have been his relation or his godmother: the historians of Britany say nothing whatever upon the subject, it is true, but I have no desire to have an affair with her great granddaughter in the seventh degree, who is Baroness of Kergumadec-en-Penthièvre, and still remains Hereditary Marshal of the district of Cornwall (in Britany), in spite of the manifold revolutionary injunctions, called "decrees of the Constituent Assembly," and in expectation of the return of—you know who. No one can submit himself to the laws of September† with more perfect docility than I.

The Duchess of Blancimiers has taken "Beaumanoir bois-ton-sang" for her cry of war: she pays no heed whatever to the life of others, and attaches not the least importance to the life of a man. I can assure you that she overwhelms with her bitterest hatred and contempt all those who do not heed her dictates, and are not inclined to go and get killed—without ever knowing why. The Duchess de Blan-

* During the English campaign in France, under Edward III., and in the beginning of the reign of King John of France, the two armies being utterly exhausted by the long duration of the war, it was agreed upon that the victory should be decided by a combat between two parties of thirty men chosen from either side. The combat took place near Ploermel, in Britany, and the victory remained on the side of the French. A temporary truce was the result of this affair. It was on this occasion that one of the combatants of the family of Beaumanoir crying out, "I am athirst," was answered, "*Bois ton sang*"—"drink thine own blood." This expression remained afterwards attached to the family name of Beaumanoir, as alluded to further on.

† The famous laws respecting the French press, in which a prohibition is established against defending the rights of the elder branch of the Bourbons.

cimiers is a legitimist of the fashion of the Gothic ages: she is completely the *Syrène-aux-meutrières*, or the Fairy Machicoulis of Palmerin d'Olive or Sir Launcelot du Lac. There are times when she resolutely establishes several young Vendeans in her old tower of Auvent and her dependencies of Mazulet with a quantity of white cockades and a few rusty muskets; and then one fine day she sends all her "Jeune France" to the Rue des Prouvaires* with about as much foresight and good sense as common charity: and, when they have been shot down, cannonaded, hashed in pieces, what do you think this generous lady does for those few of the brave fellows who have escaped being killed, and have been condemned to death *par contumace*, or in reality thrown into chains as galley-slaves? She contrives to send to each of these poor exiles and prisoners a brass ring engraved with a figure of St. Michael treading under foot the Gallic cock—a famous recompence, I trow. Its as well, however, to remark that the Florentine rings have been sculptured by the aristocratic hands of Mademoiselle Felicia de F———, and that each of these brass ornaments is a veritable *chef d'œuvre* in the style of the *Renaissance*.

We have, moreover, the artist Duchess, who considers herself a landscape painter, and paints nothing but earthquakes in water colours. She is supposed to be Bonapartist, and a liberal, and fancies herself even obliged to be in a degree Philippist, seeing that her father was chamberlain to Madame Eliza Bacciochi.† "Abyssus abyssum invocat," said the royal prophet. The following is the list and explanatory catalogue of several drawings, which this accomplished and talented female sent for the inspection of the Examining Committee for this year's Exhibition. It will be easy enough to recognize the admirable style which always distinguishes the getting up and compiling of the catalogues issued by the "Musée Royal."

No. 1. A view taken in the Bois de Boulogne, near the meer of Auteuil, as may be easily perceived by the vigour of the vegetation and the beauty of the landscape.

No. 2. Study intended for the new house to be erected for the monkeys in the Jardin des Plantes. Sketch in black-lead.

No. 3. Perspective view of the High Street of Vaugirard, in Indian ink, bistre, and sepia, after the English method. Unfinished water-colour drawing.

No. 4. Sketch of the Lougsor (otherwise Luxor) obelisk. The ground of the monolith is in red chalk—the hieroglyphics touched in, in *gouache*.

No, 5. The interesting and innocent family of General M——— finding, in a bower, a bird dead upon the seat. The figures are by M. Tancred Mitron.

No. 6. A view of the Canal de l'Ourcq by sunset. The edifice to the left is the large and splendid manufactory of Messrs. Prestel and Napoleon Godard, fabricators of preserved onions for flavouring soups in small families.

After all the sketches and unfinished drawings admitted by the examining committee of the Exhibition, for the gratification of the Parisian public, the honours of entrance to the Louvre were necessarily accorded to those of her Grace: but they were not placed in a sufficiently favourable light, and she is terribly angry with M. Cayeux‡, unhappy man, on that account.

* The street in Paris in which the legitimist conspiracy of 1831 first broke out.

† Sister to Napoleon, and, under the Empire, Grand Duchess of Parma and Piacenza.

‡ One of the directors of the Gallery of the Louvre.

Due notice ought to be taken of the Duchess of Sangi Mêlé, but I have already gone to a great length in treating of the Duchess of the *Ancien Régime*, and we have still before us those who are habitually styled the Duchesses of Bonaparte.

Among the notabilities of the Republic and the Usurpation, there are some who have poisoned themselves in their soup; there are others who have embarked with their whole family to pay a neighbourly visit to Lady Hester Stanhope, somewhere near the ruins of Palmyra; others, who have carried on a smuggling trade in tobacco and potato brandy: others, again, who have written books against all the rules of common sense: but it is not of such exceptions that we write, and we return to the general indications of the species.

The type of the "illustrations" of the Revolution—that is to say, the veritable "Duchess of the Empire," is a *Bourgeoise* who is always talking about "my aunt, the queen," when she might as well say, "my grandfather, the hosier." She generally bears such a name as Duchess of Gertrudenberg, Princess of the Danube: but as the Danube is a principality, which is no less than five hundred leagues in length, and one hundred and twenty feet in breadth, there are several of the sovereigns of Europe who are by no means inclined to admit the right of the princess to her title. The Frankfort Diet and the Prussian Government contest, *in primis*, her ducal and territorial title. M. de Munch-Bellinghausen, the President of the Germanic Diet, declares that such a concession would demand a protocol of the most exotic, anarchical, and inadmissible nature: and Prince Metternich cracks an infinity of German jokes upon the subject, which are doubtless the cleverest things in the world. In fact, among all the dwellers upon the Danube banks, the Grand Turk alone does not withhold his recognition—another proof of the resignation of the Sultan. "Allah Akbar!" says the Father of the Faithful, "the river Danusbi flows none the less for that into my Sultan seas."

As may be well supposed, it is not very feasible for the Duchess of Gertrudenberg to visit the Ambassadors of Prussia and Austria in Paris: and the same reasons prevent her travelling in Germany or in Italy, where, by the way, her two friends, the Duchesses of Orvietta and Bergamasco, would be in precisely the same predicament. It would be easy enough for them, it may be said, to escape any diplomatic interdiction of the kind, upon taking out their passports; but then it is they themselves who cannot condescend to travel *incognito* under their own family name, or that of their husbands. How is it possible in fact to allow oneself to be called Couture (of the department of the Manche) or Pholoé Colin, a Tampon by birth, when one is Duchess of Orvietta? "The Emperor had settled matters as they ought to be. But patience! the time may still come: and when his nephew is President of the French Republic, you'll see if the Austrians are not served out in their turn!"

As is natural enough to conclude, the Duchess of Gertrudenberg (formerly Ma'm'selle Tautin) has not been so fortunate as to preserve her ducal appanage of a hundred and fifty thousand francs a year, instituted upon lands in the Rhenish Provinces, by H. M. the Emperor of the French, for the benefit of her husband, and established upon the domains of the King of Prussia—*à perpetuité*, of course. Is it possible to conceive so complete a perversion of all justice on the part of the King

of Prussia, such a total contempt for aristocratic rights, and the decrees of Napoleon? According to the disinterested opinion of the illustrious widow, the King of Prussia is "the most wicked wretch that ever existed." Although she has lost her ducal appanage in Westphalia, she has managed to keep her six or seven millions of fortune, acquired in gratuitous endowments; and all the world at Paris may remark that she is not the less brilliant in the illuminations of her gateway on St. Philip's day, and other little anniversaries of the *juste milieu*. The Duchess of the Empire is essentially friendly to any order of things which does not recall the least trace of the *ancien régime*. Her political opinions are always decided by the simplest principles: her only rule of conduct is to approve and to adopt whatever can vex the legitimist party, or annoy the "Faubourg St. Germain."

The Duchess of the new *régime* is astonishingly ignorant; but then to make amends she has an immense stock of haughtiness and very little *esprit*. In stating that the Duchesses of the Empire are ignorant of a great many things, it would be as well, however, to put forward an undeniable document in support of this observation. One of these ladies considered herself entitled to put upon Napoleon the reproach of having compromised his partizans by his headstrong ambition. "He has contrived," she said, "to have us all ruined, overthrown, crushed, and almost annihilated in consequence of his obstinacy and his mania for fighting. And yet we know well enough that he might have got himself out of the scrape and us at the same time: for although he lost his crown and his title of Emperor, he might have made the most superb conditions; and the Bourbons were so afraid of him, that he might have been, if he had liked, 'Constable of Montmorency.'"*

As a contrast to these strange and singular notabilities—grotesque types, one might almost say, of their times—I might place the portrait of a young and charming Duchess, a brilliant and elegant woman, whose fine title becomes her to admiration—as would be allowed without any difficulty in all the *salons* of Paris. She has all the splendour of some Gothic ornament of jewellery, with the simplicity and grace of a field-flower: but whether she be a Duchess of ancient nobility or one of the new aristocracy is more than I can tell you, as it is a question I never asked myself. There are certain persons in whose presence any idea of this nature, or, to speak more correctly, of this conventional kind, never occurs. Beauty, talent, and modest dignity, combined with kind gentleness of disposition and mild virtue, naturally take precedence of all other considerations. "Is it more advantageous to be of high birth, or to be so distinguished that no one would think of asking whether you were or not?" Such was the question asked by La Bruyère, in 1693, and I cannot discover that the doctrines of general philosophy have made any great progress in French society for the last hundred and fifty years.

* The Duchess of the Empire in question alludes to the offer made by Louis XVIII. when in exile, to Napoleon, to place him at the head of the army with the title of "Constable of France," in case of his favouring the Restoration, and she is supposed to confound the *title* with the *family name* of the more distinguished constables of France, the "*Connétables de Montmorency.*"



THE MIDWIFE.



THE MIDWIFE.

BY L. ROUX.



SUPPOSE yourself in one of the most frequented streets of Paris: you see before you a young person in a green plaid shawl—her cap smartly trimmed with amber-coloured ribbons, telling of the gaiety of sweet eighteen. You follow her by instinct—life in Paris is liable to such aberrations. Believing she will lead you to the gates of the Conservatory*, you yield yourself up to a thousand bright illusions: the turn of her graceful ankle gives you hope of a dancer, and there is nothing in her face to forbid the fancy that she may sing. Her whereabouts is not exactly that which has occupied your mind; your first step was taken thoughtlessly, nor have you deeply reflected on your second: you make a third, and find yourself face to face with—the College of Obstetric Science!—your sylphid is a Midwife! Nothing looks so like a student of medicine as a mere lounger, and you are received with no other introduction than that of your giddy-looking visage into the Lecture-hall of Lucinda. Monsieur Hatin's course of Lectures is about to begin; the young pupil's blushes have been called forth in the interval by the sly allusions of the students around her,—language of gallantry, not in the programme. She loses no time, nevertheless, in placing herself beneath the Ægis of Science on the first bench of the amphitheatre. The Professor arrives, and the sparkling nonsense of the moment before is no longer permitted; the Pupil is given wholly to the Profession—

* The Academy of Music.

she listens with her very eyes, and it would seem hardly possible to distract her the least in the world from this excess of attention. She is more than *separated* from the medical student,—she is absolutely distinct from him; yet the wisdom of the two colleges not sufficing to place the gentler disciple out of reach of the students' tricks, the Faculty has lately acknowledged that there was a crying necessity for the isolation of the former, even though the fair neophyte should thereby learn less than when the students themselves attended the same lectures. The Professors having thus decided on giving up all but the lovelier portion of their auditory, let us hope that morality has gained all that science may have lost by this arrangement.

Art proceeds but by slow steps: the noviciate of the "Sage-femme" has its difficulties: she is destined to appear before a jury of physicians: there is a prize for her, as there formerly was for the May Queen: women having usually no distinction but that of merit, it is only fair to keep a strict account of all exceptions.

The profession of the Midwife is neither artistical nor poetical, but very medical, and eminently useful. The surgeons of all ages have borne off all distinguished patients, and this is the reason why midwives have so few occasions for displaying any marked superiority. Prejudice has condemned them, with a few honourable exceptions, to be merely the shadow—the ape of the doctor.

Devoted generally to the service of the lower classes, the Midwife inhabits the less fashionable districts: third floors are her common haunt; nay, when the interests of her patientry are concerned, she mounts to the most aërial regions, and comes sometimes in close contact even with the tiles! Ladies of this profession pay their rent when it pleases Heaven to increase the number of its creatures, and Nature herself is not more punctual than the landlord is in his demand.

There are midwives who are "Grand Crosses" of their "Order," and this without counting those who by an hyperbole more or less exaggerated are pleased to call themselves so. A "sage-femme" of any experience has only to find a credulous listener, and with the help of a system of mnemonics wholly peculiar to herself, she will recall the various personages whom she has favoured with an introduction to the daylight. If you listen to her, she was not without influence on the arrival of the King of Rome, and was consulted on the birth of the Duke of Bordeaux. The number of "noble existences" in the product of which she has taken part in the course of her life almost amounts to a miracle. But if you will have the truth, the importance of the Midwife is highly problematical: the surgeons say that her acquirements are next to nothing; she is only called by those who wish to dispense with a surgeon. There are certain sensibilities, and, above all, certain purses, that shrink alarmed from the "titled learning," in "coat and cane," of the doctor; they fear being unable to pay his fees. The Midwife presents herself, even where she knows she shall never be paid; she has the reputation of being a kinder creature than the gentleman of the diploma,—perhaps, because she receives from more hands, because her revenues have more numerous sources—for the Midwife will accept a present. The surgeon has only his fee—when he has that. These little gifts, authorized by custom, form at length a good round sum; they make up no bad income. Some people think less of neglecting payment of a debt than of the acquittal of these honorary obligations. Custom is more despotic than law. It

is the Midwife, too, who, in concert with the godmother, contrives to make of the baptismal ceremony the most important of all family gatherings.

A sign, well known to every one, and presenting, for the most part, a gaily-dressed matron holding a newly-born infant in her arms, forms an integral part of the Midwife's establishment; but it is just to remark, that her actual face differs very sensibly from that on her picture. You would be deceived should you apply here the axiom "ut pictura poesis." In the first place, the embroidery, painted white, loses nothing of its virgin purity by exposure to the weather and the action of the air; and secondly, it may happen that the "sage-femme" who appears on the "picture" in all the lustre of her youth and beauty, has been cultivating her "patientry" from time immemorial. The sign never grows old! It happens, too, sometimes, that a "portraiture" is picked up second-hand, and though representing a blonde, is adopted with but little scruple by the most piquant brunette;—the babies, however, care but little for the difference,—the discrepancy is no bar to success. We should observe, by the way, that all Midwives should be pupils of the "Maternity Hospital," and are so—in their pictures.

Every street offers one of these "insignia," where the eternal smile is stereotyped on the lips of both midwife and infant. To have a "picture," is the privilege of the "sage-femme;" but, unhappily, any advantage there may be in this mode of advertisement is in a great measure lost by its frequent occurrence.

Have you the curiosity to ask, what is the cause which throws into a learned and unusual path, so many women born to be the ornaments of some city-circle?—what concealed and irresistible power has torn them from their vocation of milliners, waiting-maids, companions, &c., to make "sages-femmes" of them? Ah! that belongs to the most profound mysteries of life on the left bank of the Seine. One, for example, has a cousin—a friend, who is a student of medicine; she begins with an attachment to the surgeon, she ends by loving the art. Things go much in the same way in the faculty of law: many women are as profound in the code as was Eloise in scholastic learning. The Midwife is the Grisette emancipated—it is she who, while Monsieur Ernest was at lectures, read Boerhaave with enthusiasm, and fell into exstacies over a chapter of Lisfranc, as others might do over a romance of La Chapelle. This solidity of judgment determined Monsieur Ernest at last to make sacrifices. Endowed with moderate ambition, and with a fortune more moderate still, he consented to establish a partnership with a pupil formed by his own hand: they took their degrees on the same day at the College of Surgeons, and then gave them the additional stamp of marriage before the proper authorities: it is thus that small medical fortunes are gained, and that the obstetric art makes fresh progress every day.

But the contrary, also, is known to occur;—the Midwife, early and essentially vowed to her vocation, gives existence, under favourable circumstances, to many medical "celebrities."—A certain member of the Faculty was remarkable only for his threadbare coats and an immense idea of the high destinies in store for him. He was distinguished by a "sage-femme," who possessed a recipe which he puffed to the tune of some thousand advertisements. To make himself lord of the midwife's heart and her recipe at one blow, was the master-stroke of the doctor. Paracelsus made astrology the substitute for all the other sciences,—advertising was the universal panacea of the new alchemist. Arrived at the apex of fortune and

celebrity, he forgot the woman who had raised him to it; but, outraged at his want of gratitude to her, she took up her pen, and the world became enlightened by the "Memoirs of a Midwife." The "Biography of Midwives," a work of the same character, contains, as we would very willingly believe, a fair number of celebrated names; yet many who distinguish themselves in this profession are far enough from being irreproachable; and to tell the whole truth as to what concerns some of them, would be to give you a satire rather than a mere picture of manners.

This profession has its "locusts,"—women of indifferent character, although sworn midwives,—having long lived much nearer to indigence than to a decent competency, and arriving at fortune at last by a road the very opposite to the right one. Though their trade is to assist at the developement of life, they make every possible effort to conceal the arrival of all such candidates for existence as have been too early inscribed on the catalogue of humanity. If, following the traces of Parent du Châtelet, you have the courage to make yourself the resigned and patient chronicler of Parisian vices, the Midwife can teach you more on that subject than any other person.

The Midwife of doubtful reputation,—she who is the disciple of La Voisin, and who, in urgent cases, is but little troubled by conscience,—becomes frequently the wife of an herbalist. It is a well-considered marriage: she can thus have the simples she requires within her reach, and she is learned in the use of them, to say nothing of the abuse. In Paris more especially, occasions of this sort but too frequently arise. Temptation presents itself armed with a purse and a sophism, and infanticide is committed to ward off dishonour. Physicians have vainly declared this mode of treatment to be a species of poisoning. Many midwives know as much about all that as the surgeons themselves: it is for that very reason that they continue to carry on this practice. It suffices to them that they possess the power,—they make no scruple as to using it. The sums received, or to be received, are calculated much more exactly than the consequences of an atrocity. The victim fears dishonour more than death; her accomplice loves money better than honesty. These are the criminals, in our opinion, when a crime of this sort is committed,—the midwife, who risks the condemnation of the law; the unhappy woman, who braves death, and who suffers it, sooner or later, from the more or less immediate consequences of her weakness; and society, which, ever-armed for vengeance, punishes her fallen daughter too severely by the force of opinion, and thus drives her to the commission of a double suicide. After all, we see the same crimes arise from the same causes, through all the epochas of a highly-advanced civilization. If history is to be believed, the manners of Athens were not exempt from this fearful taint. The Greek women were deeply versed in medicine. The matrons were the almost exclusive assistants at child-birth; and Lais and Aspasia deepened to darker tints the evil reputation arising from their immoral conduct, by assisting those addicted to the same irregularities to conceal the turpitude of their lives.

Now, if these departures from morality formed the exception in our manners, the better way had been to be silent on the subject; but since they are, on the contrary, one of the endemic diseases of society as now constituted, a remedy should be sought for them. We leave this reflection to be worked out and acted on by the moralist.

The Midwife who keeps a boarding-house is at the same time the Harpocrates and the Hippocrates of her art: her discretion is become proverbial; none would set foot in her dwelling if they thought there were any danger of being seen there: she is the friend of those rich bachelors who hope to preserve their social position, while they shrink from the noblest of those duties that devolve on all well-principled members of society. Many rich proprietors have more confidence in some "sage-femme" of a district, at prudent distance from their own, than in the mayor of their arrondissement*; and prefer a disgrace which they must continue to conceal, to a household which they would have to govern in the character of heads of families. Society, which withers so many things less worthy of blame, has it ever put these men under its ban? It is true that the midwives are *so* discreet! And then, too, even society considers a rich man as a man to be treated with observant respect.—Prudent society!

But it is not enough that a Midwife should possess the unlimited confidence of her patients, and should be advantageously known to all those who confide to such as she is, what they desire to conceal from all the world besides: she must be capable of anticipating confidences,—of maintaining relations with incipient scandals. Paris is an invaluable asylum for the provinces, as the country is a convenient retreat for the accidents of Parisian life. The Midwife who keeps a boarding-house throws her nets out in the form of advertisement, and baits her hooks with modest words of course. Nothing is demanded from persons in the condition of servants, except perhaps their assistance in the house for such periods as may be agreed on: it is, however, as well for you to present yourself with your savings in your hand. It is quite enough for the Midwife to give her address, with some philanthropic formula tacked to it: all those interested in such matters know how of themselves to make appeal to her professional acquirements. No one is known in her establishment. All ladies have some name or other of course; the chandler's daughter is a countess, no less: women of title call themselves Louisa, or Seraphina; those who come from the most distant provinces have their residence in the capital; the Parisian, on the contrary, lives "far in the country:" almost all have husbands in some island of the South Seas; and each affects to believe the other, in order to avoid being questioned in her turn. To conclude: the house of the Midwife is a Thebaid—it is situated at the end of an immense court-yard; her porter is deaf and dumb; and all her windows are skylights. One must show a fair appearance to be received into her gynesium. All visits to the respectable matronage therein are severely forbidden: against man, she has promulgated an edict of perpetual banishment.

There is no profession in which more weight is derived from personal character than in that of the Midwife. If, in addition to the virtues proper to her sex, she possess the acquirements needful to her profession, she will presently enjoy an irreproachable reputation in her neighbourhood, and will secure a comfortable income. Her "patientry" will have cost her certain sacrifices of pride; she has found it needful to keep on good terms with the porters; she must not alienate, by too forbidding a dignity, the good graces of that important personage, the nurse; she has to satisfy, by reiterated visits, the exacting spirit of decorum, behind a counter, of the

* The marriage ceremony, in France, is performed before the mayor.

purse-proud battling for his fancied dignity. There are patients who will summon her twenty times for each infant they present to the world. Let her but become the fashion, though it be never so little, and she will no longer have a moment to call her own. What a hurry the babies are all in *then*, to get a glimpse of the light! She was going to sit down to dinner,—she is called off to visit the fat wife of some shopkeeper; luckily she has made her bargain beforehand, and this is "my gossip's" fifteenth adventure of the sort.

Now all this is more or less common-place, yet all this is fact, and composes the most interesting scenes of private life. Many children attach great importance to being born. Men of genius may pass through the hands of a Midwife, while she knows nothing of the matter: her profession is a lottery.

All is not done, however, when she has proceeded to the first cares demanded by her patient. Once assured of the infant's existence, it is part of her business to foretell its future fate,—her vaticinations regulated, of course, by the sex of their subject. She must be prepared to judge *medically* of what drink he is first to swallow: one might compose verses on this subject; there *are* midwives who have written poems on it.

The Midwife is a good specimen for those persons of her sex who dream of "the freedom of women." Would it be an abuse of our privileges to say half a word here of the stupid hypotheses lately set forth as to the rights of woman? The experience of ages, and her very nature, fix her in the sanctuary of the domestic hearth. In the bosom of her family, she is a queen; when a mother, she has a right to our adoration; but remove her from this centre of her affections and of ours,—from this dear and sacred circle of private life, and you put her altogether out of her place,—you assign her a destiny wholly foreign to her true one, which is that of loving and cherishing, and forming the minds, and moulding the hearts of her children;—you produce misery and total confusion.

The Midwife does not desert her duties as the mother of a family. On the contrary, she enters into them more completely than any other individual of her sex. A mother often helps others to become such.

Viewed philosophically, what is there more noble or more elevated than the profession of a Midwife? But she is too close to nature to be appreciated by civilization. Socrates is said to have traced a line around his house, and within this he shut up his wife. Was this the reason why the household of Socrates was so notoriously mismanaged? Let us add, that the wisest of men was the son of a Midwife.

There have been women who, like Lady Hester Stanhope, have been inspired from on high to confide their religico-poetical dreams to the burning sands of the desert. Others have extemporized for themselves a mission which embraces no less than the four quarters of the globe, and parade their fantastic peregrinations from one continent to another. They have had their husbands imprisoned; they are unable to bear any kind of servitude; they have imposed on themselves the duty of freeing their sex from the iron yoke of whatever writeth itself *Man*. Others enter, by means of certain octavos, into the privileged class of the "celebrated" of all ages. Some are seen to equal, in force and enthusiasm, the contemporary poets, or to extemporize operas; and in romance itself, music has been known to

ally itself with poetry, under the inspiration of a single feminine muse. The sceptre of Comedy has dwindled to a distaff; Memoir, heretofore the exclusive domain of statesmen, is become the plaything of duchesses and waiting-women, and serves as a prologue to divorces that have made the world ring. All this is doubtless very fine; but the type of female philanthropy is to be sought elsewhere, appearing all the more noble because her office, so useful to a class of children who are pariahs from their birth, can only be worthily appreciated by a few witnesses.

We must proclaim it loudly. The woman whom her knowledge has placed at the head of an establishment like the Lying-in Hospital, is a woman truly great and worthy of respect. This house, which it would require much graphic power to describe fittingly, is summed up in her; what ceaseless cares — what polished neatness. How many fine qualities have been required to raise her to the level of all that this office demands; what strength of mind to prevent herself from becoming a mere creature of habit, of routine,—a mere piece of her office, as so frequently happens to lawyers, physicians, and consummate diplomatists. The order of the house is admirable; the incessant charity that maintains it, is still more extraordinary. It is not in any station beneath the richest of the trading classes, that you need expect to find the luxury and medical refinement visible in the meanest hall of the Foundling Hospital. There is nothing more extravagantly contrasted, more entirely inconsistent, than the first moments of those especial victims to the poverty that decimates the poorer classes of the Parisian population—of Foundlings, considered with reference to the lives and habits of their probable parents, and to their own future lot, supposing a Future reserved to them. Proceeding from whatever hand, the foundlings are received into an asylum wherein everything is well ordered for taking care of them. Delivered afterwards to a hireling peasant woman, at the rate of three-halfpence a day, few survive the murderous regimen they are subjected to; they die in the hands of the nurses—it is an unfailing consequence! But why do they die in such numbers, at least in the hospital, where they are so well cared for? Good heavens! who shall say? According to statistical calculations, a foundling, who arrives at the condition of a married man, is an exception infinitely rare—hardly one in ten thousand,—and the state expends millions to arrive at this funereal result.

Honest philanthropists, always disposed to apply a remedy to every evil, what does it matter to you though there should be foundlings by myriads, provided they be well treated, or appear to be so. Well, the question is resolved, they are not well treated, or if they be, it is to no purpose: those who escape the mortality go to people the Houses of Correction; they perpetuate poverty and shame both within the pale of society and without. There is but one remedy for this evil—it is that of suppressing it; it is to permit the scarcely-formed ties of blood to strengthen themselves by ameliorating the lot of the indigent classes, whence proceed the majority of the foundlings, for with the exception we have nothing to do. One fact is fully established: it is, that a child *found*, is, in the present day, a child *lost;* this play on the word, cruelly serious, we retain, for there was no mode of avoiding it.

Honour once again to the Midwife, who, without any of the flattering compensations with which the world surrounds those who devote themselves to many other careers, accomplishes some good work every day of her life, some work highly useful and made up of many details, which render her respectable in the eyes of all!

The common Midwife is altogether eclipsed and put out of consideration, when one has seen what constitutes the part performed by her who is at the head of the Lying-in Hospital.

Arrived at the dignity of Professor, she is hand-in-hand with the Medical Eminences of her day: her auditory is composed of women only, but she is none the less placed on the apex of Science; her name is an authority,—she has an Editor,—yes! and a scientific Editor, too! It is notorious that the Faculty has lately refused a diploma to a woman who was in every way worthy of the distinction: the learned body was afraid perhaps of rivalry, and the influence of so noble an example on the destinies of Medicine. This fact seems ridiculous: it is merely —to use the common expression—"an imitation of the Greeks." The Areopagus, having seen that medical acquirements were spreading too extensively among women, proscribed the profession of Midwifery; but the prejudice in favour of midwives was so deeply rooted among the ladies of Athens, that they preferred death to being attended by men. The Athenian Agnodice carried the love of her art so far as to disguise herself, coming to the aid of her own sex in the dress of the other. Convicted of practising her profession in spite of the decree, she was condemned to death, and obtained her pardon only at the prayer of the most distinguished ladies of Athens. The Tribunal would have done better, perhaps, if, in the matter of accouchements, it had declared itself incompetent of judging.

It is permitted to the Midwife to act as Professor in her particular walk: she may even send pupils into the provinces; and those who have practised under her do not forget to name it on their signs.

The office of the "sage-femme" is not confined, as we have seen, to the usual cares demanded by her patient. She is a votary-general of the goddess Hygeia; and when you name a midwife, you name the Physician of ladies for every malady, real or supposed. When an infant has been brought into existence,—when it is well awakened to life, the Midwife is still not at the end of her trials: she is required to dress him,—to bedeck, and bedizen, and set him off gaily. Luckily, she has close to her hand all the vestments of him who, according to Fitche, is king of the creation; the little velvet cap adorned with ribbons, the cambric shirts, the fine embroidery; all this passes through the hands of the Midwife; she would be in despair if any other than herself should instal the newly-born. Thus adjusted and adonized like one of Waltein's "Loves," she presents him to the family, which is forced to admit that, after the little Cupid himself, the most admirable thing in the world is the Midwife.





THE HORTICULTURIST.



THE HORTICULTURIST.

BY ALPHONSE KARR.



CERTAIN tastes brighten and fill up so completely a man's existence, that we can easily understand how all feel the want of a hobby to indulge according to their fancy.

Thus, sometimes we see very superior men devote their lives to a few flowers, or a few insects, and not uncommonly to a single flower, or a single insect: an admirable instinct, or perhaps a wise philosophy, has taught them to present the least possible target to the shafts of fortune, contenting themselves with a humble lot, and enjoying a simple happiness apart from the busy world.

The intensity and violence of a passion are not to be measured by its object. The Horticulturists, who, like the bees, live among the flowers, have also, like them, a dangerous sting. The softer passions protect themselves by an outward ferocity, like rare plantations surrounded by briars and thistles, to preserve them from the encroachments of cattle.

This reminds us how we became acquainted with the naturally bad disposition of sheep, which we had always regarded as emblems of gentleness and kindness. "Sir," said a shepherd to us, as we walked side by side along the road to Epernay, "there is no animal so wicked as the sheep: only look at mine; they care no more for the pasture of that inclosed field than for this on the common, where they may range at will, and yet there they are in the field. They must do it to have me

taken up for trespassing, and fined. Brrr—brrr—seize him there, Medor—brrr—. It is the black one yonder that is teazing my dog: it takes a delight in irritating him. The malicious animal is trying to provoke the dog to worry him, knowing that when a dog kills a sheep, it is the poor shepherd who pays. Here, boy.—Medor! Medor!—Down, sir, down.—Behind—fall back."

A discussion once arose, in the presence of the author of this sketch, concerning a stock, asserted to be *blue*, of which the blossoms were a most beautiful *yellow;* and the writer's life was actually put in jeopardy by his asking of what use it could possibly be to have *blue* stocks to produce yellow *flowers*.

It will be remembered with what enthusiasm tulips were cultivated all over Europe, particularly in France and in Holland, about thirty years ago. One root, the *Semper Augustus*, was sold for 12,000 francs. Another, the *Yellow Crown*, for 1,123 francs, and a carriage and two bay horses. A third, not very fine, the *Viceroy*, fetched no less than the following articles in exchange:—Four tons of wheat, eight of rye, four oxen, eight pigs, twelve sheep, two casks of wine, four barrels of beer, two firkins of butter, a thousand pounds' weight of cheese, a bed, bedstead, and bedding, a chest of clothes, and a silver goblet.

At that time, it was quite usual to see in the newspapers such a paragraph as the following, under the head of foreign news:—"Amsterdam.—The Admiral Liefhers is flowering beautifully at M. Berghem's."

But to return to our story. Horticulturists took it into their heads one fine day, that yellow tulips were no longer beautiful, and were unworthy the admiration they had hitherto received; that the only tulips worth looking at, or cultivating, were those with white grounds. Henceforth, yellow tulips were to be banished, and their seeds scattered to the winds. Amateurs were not, however, undivided on the question. Letters, pamphlets, songs, and even thick quartos, were written on the subject. The yellow-tulip party were called obstinate, prejudiced, illiterate, enemies to all improvement, and Jesuits; while the partisans of white tulips were pronounced to be innovators, revolutionists, democrats, and sans-culottes. Friends quarrelled, husbands and wives separated, and families were disunited.

As M. Müller was one evening playing at dominoes with one of his oldest friends, tulips chanced to be mentioned. M. Müller was a yellow *tulipist*, while his friend sided with the reformed partisans of the white ones. The celebrated composer, Mehul, himself a distinguished amateur, had just gone over to the white party. Being both well-bred men, M. Müller and his friend spoke with the greatest moderation, and appeared to avoid, with extreme care, the most distant approach to a dispute.

"Nature," said M. Müller, "as she has made nothing in vain, so has she produced nothing out of place. There is some beauty in every one of her productions. Why should amateurs rigidly exclude from their gardens certain flowers? There are, undoubtedly, some white tulips that I would willingly admit into my collection, were my garden large enough."

"I, also," replied his friend, not wishing to be behind in politeness and concessions, "I am ready to allow that the *Erymanthe*, all yellow as it is, is a very presentable flower."

"I do not condemn the *Unique de Delphes*, white as it is," said M. Müller.

"But it is not very white," observed the friend: "it keeps, for three or four days, the yellow tint that distinguishes it when its petals first open, and for this reason we do not esteem it much."

"Yet it is the one of all your collection that I should prefer."

The two friends were on these excellent terms when Madame Müller left them to make tea. It would be difficult to ascertain by what imperceptible transitions the discussion warmed into a serious quarrel, until insults were exchanged. It is certain, that when Madame Müller returned to the room, the table was overturned, the dominoes scattered over the carpet, while M. Müller and his friend, having seized each other by the hair, were engaged in a desperate struggle.

It will be readily imagined with what feelings of shame the two antagonists were overwhelmed, after their anger had a little cooled. On the morrow, M. Müller wrote the following note to his friend:—

"I am a brute, really worse than a bear. Pray receive my apologies, and for the sake of our old friendship let us forget this foolish affair. My wife begs of you to come and dine with us to-day.—There will be a favourite dish of yours.

"Your friend,

"Muller.

"P.S.—Will you oblige me, my dear friend, by putting aside for me a few of your beautiful white tulips? I have reserved for them one of my best beds. I am particularly anxious for the *Palamede* and the *Agate Royale*."

Shortly after despatching the above, he received the following answer:—

"I shall be with you a quarter before five. You will permit me, my dear friend, to introduce to you a horticulturist who desires to see your magnificent tulips, especially your *Tenebreuse*, your *Julvécourt*, and your delicate *Lisa*."

Out of compliment to his friend, M. Müller expressed his admiration for the whitest amongst the white tulips, while his friend was no less warm in his praise of the yellow specimens. However, this sudden change could only proceed from generous feeling between the two friends. M. Walter's concession passed away with the sentiment and impulse of the first moment; M. Müller's did not long survive his momentary enthusiasm. The poor white tulips were not half so well tended and cared for as the yellow. The second year, M. Müller thought they encumbered his garden; the third, they were placed near a waterspout, where they flowered badly; and M. Müller, after showing his visitors his fine collection of yellow tulips, in all their brilliancy and splendour of full bloom, would say, "These are the only samples of white tulips we keep: they were given to me by my friend Walter, and I prize them highly for his sake." And when, ten minutes afterwards, he added, "I am at a loss to understand why horticulturists cultivate white tulips," no wonder that M. Müller's visitors agreed with him.

There were, in the reign of Louis XIV., only four sorts of roses known. At the

present day, the reasonable horticulturists—those who are not so blinded by their love of new discoveries as to give five or six different names to the same plant—reckon forty different species, and more than eighteen hundred varieties.

Certain amateurs, led astray by the ambition of being the exclusive possessors of a particular variety, seek for defects in roses with as much eagerness as others would look for beauties. If a rose be but rare, that is beauty sufficient; and it is prized, on that account, more than those rich in form, colour, or perfume. Rose-fanciers have been seeking, these last fifty years, for a green, blue, or black rose, and for the double-capuchin rose.

Madame de Genlis, who pretends to have originated the moss-rose, gives, in one of her works, a receipt to procure a green and a black rose; the process, which is exceedingly simple, is only to graft a rose on a cassia or a holly tree. We have tried on both; the holly produced its green and prickly leaves, and the cassia bore its accustomed fruit.

Every year, towards the end of May, a never-failing report goes the round of the newspapers that the double-capuchin rose is at last discovered. We have journeyed far and wide to see it, but till now we have neither found it double nor capuchin. To produce the blue rose, horticulturists have filled every nook of their gardens with every description of blue flower, in the vain hope that the bees, by carrying the pollen from their stamina to a rose-tree, might give birth to the wished-for flower. We have on this subject an idea of our own, which we shall put in practice some one of these days.—The roses designated by the blackest names, such as the "Negress," the "Ourika," &c., are all violet.

Amateurs are constantly on the watch to observe the most minute differences. One rose is remarkable for its stem, another for its thorns. This is precious on account of its total want of beauty; that is admired in consequence of its having no perfume; and another would not be nearly so valuable, did it not possess an odour peculiarly disagreeable. In fact, the more extraordinary they are, and the farther removed from what all the world can have, the more highly they are prized.



Happy the man who could possess a rose which would become a vine, that he might make wine from his roses! We have seen a rose-bush which the happy possessor triumphantly assured us had not flowered for five years. Lucky man! but still more lucky would he be if next year it would bear no leaves!

A horticulturist of no mean note was the curate of Palaiseau, a small village in the department of Seine-et-Oise, where our friend Victor Bohain had a rose-tree as high as a plum-tree, which unfortunately died in the winter of 1838.

The curate of Palaiseau lived to the age of eighty-two. He died in the beginning of spring, just at the time of the year when he would have enjoyed, for the sixtieth time, the precious collection of flowers that it had been the occupation of his life to form.

A few years ago, this venerable priest had a great curiosity to see a collection belonging to an English gentleman.

This collection was of itself a real "*rosa mystica*," as say the litanies. The Englishman's garden was a harem, surrounded by lofty walls, inside which no one had ever been admitted, on any pretext whatever. Our English amateur was furiously jealous of his roses. For him alone his flowers were to bloom in all their varied richness of colour and exquisite perfume. Some German author has said that the happy are difficult of access; and if this be true, the Englishman might have been the happiest of mortals: no one had even seen his roses, and he was even jealous of the breeze that wafted their fragrant odours beyond the precincts of his garden. To complete the rigours of his harem, he often thought of having for guardians of his roses (to him real odalisques) a guard of eunuchs, who, if not blind, should at least have lost the sense of smelling.

However, one night our good curate set out, and drove five long leagues in a carriage without springs. He was at this time nearly eighty years of age; he arrived before daylight, and applied to the gardener; to tell the whole truth, the good priest is accused of having employed bribery to obtain an entrance into the mysterious retreat.

The gardener was not incorruptible. As the first speck of dawn appeared in the east, he softly opened the garden-door with well-oiled key to admit the curate, who was breathless with impatience. They moved silently and slowly from the door, it being still so early that nothing could be distinguished; the curate was beginning to inhale the fragrant air, embalmed by the Englishman's roses, when suddenly a voice was heard from an open window of the mansion:—

"William! William!—Do you hear? Show that gentleman out of the garden."

From this there was no appeal. The poor curate could only return to his carriage, and drive home, after journeying ten leagues over an execrable road, and to no purpose. The only consolation he received was from a neighbour, who maintained that the Englishman only kept his garden so sacred from visitors because he had not a single flower in it.

Amateurs, generally speaking, do not like to admit visitors indiscriminately into their gardens: they have a particular horror of persons designated as pickers and stealers. Neither bribery nor corruption, scaling walls nor false keys,—in short, nothing will deter certain amateurs from possessing themselves of a shoot or a seed of a flower that they have not.

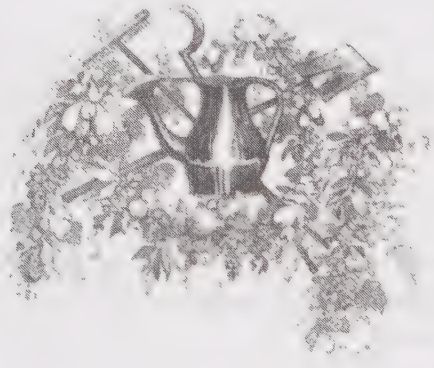
In 1828, the Duchess de Berri obtained from the seed-plots of roses that were planted every year at Rosni, twelve flowers that appeared to her remarkably beautiful; but as it was still more desirable to have unique, or at least very rare, roses, she commissioned Madame de Larochejacquelin to show them and ask the opinion of a celebrated florist. After having examined them a few minutes, the florist decided

that there were amongst them three unknown varieties: but he gave the preference to one over the two others, and it was named the *Hybride de Rosni*.

About two years after, in May or June 1830, the last time the Duchess de Berri was destined to see her roses in bloom, she thought that, having enjoyed, during two years, the possession of the Hybrides de Rosni, she might allow the pleasure to be shared by others, and accordingly again commissioned Madame de Larochejacquelein to present a slip in her name to the eminent florist she had consulted on the former occasion.

Madame de Larochejacquelein found the horticulturist in his garden, reading under the shade of two beautiful rose-trees, laden with magnificent flowers; he received the offer with expressions of gratitude proportionate to the honour and attention; but they arrived too late. The florist had taken care, during the short time that the roses had been in his possession, two years before, to cut two shoots from the most beautiful variety; he had grafted them with the most perfect success, and he received the duchess's message under the shade of those very trees, which were incomparably fairer than any to be seen at Rosni.

Most cultivators of flowers indulge their taste more from vanity than love, more to show them than to see them. With very few exceptions, horticulturists do not love flowers for their own sakes. Some will plant in the pebbles a dahlia (*the White-edged Incomparable*), to insure its being party-coloured; others will strip all the leaves from a camelia. In France, flowers have a great deal to do with politics. On the return of the elder branch of the Bourbons, M. P * * * guillotined all the imperials in his garden. Violets, exiled by Louis XVIII., have since been recalled. M. de Castres, Commandant of the Palace of the Tuileries, banished the carnation. For some years after the revolution of July, lilies disappeared from all the royal gardens. We generally respect all passions and all means of happiness; but we do not believe in the passion of the Horticulturist: it is not a real passion.





THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR.



THE COURT OF ASSIZE.*

BY CORMENIN.



I have buzzed long enough about the ears of statesmen and of kings; now be it mine to wheel my flight towards the Bench, and rouse the Judges with my sting.

What! after having passed at the edge of the sword every contortion of language in the Speech from the Throne—after having bantered the sublime Philippics of our deputies—after having laid hands on the address of the Speaker—after having heard our preachers launch their pulpit-thunders at the mighty of this world, and blow upon the gilded dust of their vices—shall the Bench—the Bench alone be inaccessible to the scourge of the pamphleteer?

Nay, that would be neither just nor desirable—even for those who sit there.

* In none of these Sketches has the Editor found it more difficult to render the French original in language comprehensible to the mass of English readers, than in the present. The subject, indeed, goes beyond the mere manners of France; it involves one of her most important and most peculiar institutions—that for the administration of criminal justice. The following lines may serve to give a general notion of the features of the French system:—

The preliminary inquiry, which is performed in England publicly by the coroner with a jury, or by the committing magistrates, is conducted in France secretly, by the *Juge d'Instruction*. The grand jury does not exist in France, but every accusation of crime is submitted, in the first place, to a body called the "Chambre du Conseil du Tribunal de Première Instance," which may annul it by a decision of "*non bien*," equivalent to the finding "no true bill." If, however, it passes this ordeal, it is referred to the "Chambre d'Accusation," which transmits it (if it think fit) to the Assizes by an "*arrêt de renvoi*." There are twenty-seven Cours Royales in France, each of which furnishes a president (in rotation) to hold the Courts of Assize for the trial of criminals. The pro-

If some Corneille were to present another Agesilaus on the stage, the public would exclaim, "Solve senescentem—He dotes, let him go!"

If our melodious Rossini were to assail our ears with discords, the public would respond by an accompaniment of Jew's harps.

If the sylph of the opera, the divine Taglioni, instead of fluttering in the air, were to hobble and stumble over the stage, the public would have the impudence to pelt her with orange-peel.

If the marquises and viscounts of our inimitable Molière were to pass their time in making ducks and drakes in the town-ditches, the pit would laugh all such marquises and viscounts out of countenance for ever.

We hiss kings, we hiss geniuses, we hiss the great, the eloquent, and our dancing-girls; and I don't see why we should not hiss whatever can be hissed at—though it sit on the woolsack.

I say nothing of the charges of the Court to the jury—the offspring of a turgid rhetoric, which good taste and good sense would fain suppress. I have asserted more than once—and I stick to my text—beyond the gates of our capital, nobody knows how to wield the pen! There are provincial speakers,—there are no provincial writers—not one at the present day, not one among thirty-two millions. If any such there be, where is the meteor? Where is he? Let him shoot up to sight within the horizon!

The art of the pen—the sublime art of letters, requires the sun of Paris,—the sun of the metropolis, to unfold the bud and to mature the flower. It signifies but little, indeed, that the Bench of France should be somewhat illiterate, provided it be esteemed for its learning, its virtues, its integrity, and its disinterestedness; and in these respects the Bench of France is the most estimable in Europe.

But there is no light without a shade, no rule without an exception; our eulogy may be the rule, but the charge must be the exception, lest such charges should grow into the rule.



The magistracy of France is divided into two classes, that of the Bar and that

secution is always conducted by a procureur-general, avocat-general, or their deputies. These functionaries form an official legal class, distinct from the bar and from the bench. They are termed *gens du parquet*, or the junior grade of the judicial magistracy. They practise exclusively as the salaried officers of the crown, and they are intimately connected, by their position and their future prospects, with the superior members of the Cour Royale, who preside in the court. The English reader will hardly know whether most to wonder at a Bar so led, or a Bench so educated. The distinguished author of this paper has forcibly pointed out the defects of the one and of the other. (See, for further details of Criminal Justice in France, the *British and Foreign Review*, vol. ii. p. 105.)

of the Bench: the former is temporary, the latter permanent; the former stands, the latter sits; the former declaims, the latter judges; the one prosecutes, the other condemns.

I know of no finer part in the drama of our Assizes than that of accuser-general, if he maintain the calmness and the gravity of the public which he represents. The public acts not for vengeance, but in self-defence; it seeks to detect, not to persecute the criminal; and when convicted he is handed over to the executive officers of the law. The only eloquence the public approves is that of Truth; the only force to be employed in the public service is that of Justice. When a man has been apprehended, and is dragged between two soldiers to sit in a dock in front of the twelve citizens who are to try him—of the Court which is to interrogate him—of the counsel for the Crown who is to arraign him, and of the curious public searching his looks—that man, though he should have worn a king's robe and borne a king's sceptre—is then nothing more than an object of compassion. His fortune, his freedom, his life, his honour, dearer than his life, are in your hands.—Gentlemen of the Bench and of the Bar, what are your emotions?

Little do they understand their office and their calling, who debase the magistrate in the man, the actor, the partizan. They do not arraign the prisoner—they plead, they bawl, they rave, they rage with invective; now they arrange the folds of their black drapery in studied folds, to accuse with elegance, as the gladiators of Rome studied the attitude in which they should gracefully await the death-stroke: now they mimic the gesture and the voice of a tragedy-king, and fancy they are making an effect when they are only making a noise.

Erect at the bar, with a countenance flaming with animation, they command the jury, seated at their feet; they perplex them with gesticulation—they stun them with vociferation. I have seen jurors shut their eyes and stop their ears at the approach of these storms of rhetoric—of these deafening clamours. Pity, oh! pity for the jury, if not for the prisoners!

The jury did not come into court to witness the scenes of an imaginary drama. When they go to the play it is quite another thing: there they go to take pleasure in the emotions of the stage. They go to be terrified; they go to be moved. They take with them a handkerchief, to bring it back soaked with tears; and they know all the time the prisoners and tyrants of melodrama, who worry their prosy speeches for effect, are, in all other respects, a worthy set of fellows; and that the martyrs who are massacred in the side-scenes remain in excellent health notwithstanding, and very willingly resume with their assassins the game at dominos in the coffee-room down stairs, which was interrupted by the rising of the curtain. After all, if the actor play amiss, the spectators may hiss him, without prejudice to the author.

But when Reality takes the place of Fiction,—when these same spectators sit as jurymen in court,—when it is their verdict which is to kill or to acquit, their thoughts assume a graver colour. They bid the giddy fancies, which queen it in the brain, keep out. They have no ears but for the calmer voice of reason, no eyes but for the fact, no thought but for the thoughts of the prisoner: they question his every feature; they anxiously scrutinize his answers—his contradictions—his ejaculations—his emotions—his smiles—his pale countenance—his chill shudder.

There they sit in the presence of God, of man, and of that sacred Truth which they would fain lay hold on—which they search, they demand, they implore. Waken them not from so holy a meditation—the rhetoric of all your orators is not worth a good man's conscience.

No, they mistake their calling, who as counsel for the Crown are for ever straining their sinews and their jaws, to stilt up a heinous crime on the shoulders of a trifling misdemeanour.

They mistake their calling who dress up the common truisms of morality in the jingle of poetic rhodomontade, and who would scare the public, if public vengeance does not fall on the veriest trifle.

They mistake their calling who apostrophize the prisoner, inveigh against his counsel, and browbeat his witnesses.

They mistake their calling who do not frankly abandon the prosecution, when the evidence has brought out the innocence of the accused, but who persist in their demand of punishment—lessened by one degree.

They mistake their calling who stimulate and excite the jury, the Court, and the audience by their impassioned metaphors, their frantic appeals to political sympathies, their rolling eyes and threatening gestures—to earn the wretched satisfaction of having it said, "How powerfully he has spoken! How eloquent he has been!"

I am not Keeper of the Seals, and surely I have no wish to hold that office; but if I were, I would remove this or that public accuser for having been eloquent out of place; and I would imitate the generosity of those Romans who broke their officers for having killed an enemy in single combat, out of the ranks. Every thing has its place—eloquence as well as courage—as well as virtue.

Here you will find a public prosecutor who causes the acquittal of a criminal by his exaggeration of the crime.

There you will meet with another who, in a political trial, does more harm to the government by the bursts of his intemperate zeal, than the most violent outrages of the libel he would repress.

The rule ought to be (and the exceptions should be rare) that no one should act as counsel for the crown under thirty-six years of age. For, if the public prosecutors are the organs of the public, they cannot possess or use too much moderation, dignity, experience, learning, or good taste. As no one has a right to cut short an attorney-general in the midst of his harangue, he ought to know how to guide himself. If there be a lack of magistrates, spare not, stint not,—double their salaries: spare not, stint not, and recollect that this is not a question of money, but a question involving the liberty, the honour, the life of your fellow-citizens.

The duties of that higher branch of the magistracy which occupies the bench are not less numerous than those of the lower branch, which pleads at the bar. I know of no office more solemn, more sacred, or more august, than that of the chief Judge of the Assize. The assemblage of his powers represents the triple sway of might, religion, and justice. He unites the triple authority of the King, the Priest, and the Judge. How high an opinion ought a magistrate placed in so eminent a situation—perhaps the first in society—to have of himself, that is to say, of his

proper duties, in order to discharge them worthily. With what sagacity must he connect the thread of evidence, broken a hundred times by the tortuous skill of the advocate. To bring out truth from the contradictions of the witnesses; to compare the oral with the written evidence; to combine the analogous points of the case; to cut short doubts; to urge the questions; to lay hold of every circumstance, every fact, every letter, every admission, every exclamation, every word, every gesture, every look, every tone of voice which may give a clue to the truth; to interrogate the prisoner with gentle firmness; to exhort him to confession and repentance; to raise his fainting spirits; to warn him when he is committing himself; to direct him when he proceeds; to restrain the counsel for the crown and for the prisoner within the bounds of propriety, without checking their rightful liberty; to explain to the jury the points of law; to give the witnesses full time to reflect, and to give their answers clearly; to keep a respectful silence in the court:—these are the manifold duties of the President of a Court. Happy is he who can understand them,—who can discharge them!

But the great stumbling-block of the Judge is the summing-up of the evidence. To sum up, is to give a clear account of the facts; to go over the evidence on either side; to examine what has been said in support of the charge, and in behalf of the prisoner, and nothing but what has been said; and to place before the jury, with logical simplicity, the questions to which their verdict is to be the answer. All summings-up ought to be precise, firm, full, impartial, and short.



But there are judges who loll in their chairs, as if they were taking their ease; there are judges who sketch pen-caricatures of the people in court, who twine their fingers through their curls, who pass all the pretty women in court in review with their eye-glass, who intimidate the prisoner by the harsh and imperious brevity of their questions, who affront and put out the witnesses, bully the counsel, and provoke the jury. Some are ridiculous, and others impertinent; but there are some who are worse than either,—those who give way to all their passions as men or as partisans. They rush into the strife of politics—their weapons in their hand—their finger on the trigger; they open upon the jury all the batteries of the accusation; they throw into the shade the defence; they lump the facts of the case together, instead of clearing them up; they expatiate upon times, and places, and persons, and characters, and opinions, wholly foreign to the cause; they want to court the government, or a coterie, or a personage; they hint that what the jury still consider

as a mere charge, is in their eyes a convicted crime; they point out its obvious commission, and its imminent danger; they quibble with law, and flourish with rhetoric; they supply fresh arguments, which they invent, to those which the public accuser has left untouched, and excuse themselves by saying such is the language of the indictment, though the indictment says nothing of the sort, and they add a falsehood to their shame.

Fancy the position of a prisoner who has been refreshed, who has been restored by the courageous and persuasive language of his counsel, only to be felled to the earth by the terrible weight of the Judge's charge. The jury too!—the jury might be upon their guard against the vehemency of an accuser, who was only doing his daily work, and of the counsel for the prisoner, because theirs was avowedly partial language; but what protection is there against the hand that holds the impartial beam of justice?—against the Judge, who ought simply to report upon the cause, without letting his own opinion transpire,—without disclosing the man under the robe of the magistrate?

The jury have no vast and practised powers of memory to retain, to compare, to arrange, and to judge the conflicting arguments bandied from side to side. What with the excitement of their feelings, and the fatigue of their duties, they yield, as all plain men do, to the last impression they have received. If that last impression be given under the form of a reiterated accusation, how heavy a weight must lie upon the conscience of that jury!—how great a peril on the head of that prisoner! I shudder to think that, in the country more especially, a rustic jury—a jury of simple, illiterate men—a dreadful jury—may allow the artifice or the passion of the summing-up of the Judge to determine of itself—of itself alone—a sentence of death. The law provides that the prisoner, whose innocence is still presumed by a humane fiction, should have the last word. Is it not, then, an open violation of humanity and of right, if the Judge, instead of summing up the evidence, reiterate the thunders of the accusation? Is the prisoner to have two opponents instead of one,—first the counsel for the Crown, afterwards the Judge upon the Bench? If he raises his supplicating looks to the Court,—if he takes refuge in the sanctuary of justice,—is he to meet a weapon turned against his breast, instead of a shield to cover it? If he venture to make a timid observation, he irritates the very person who is to apply the sentence, in the event of his conviction. If his counsel protest, he is set down by the Court. If the papers publish the proceedings of the Judge, they are prosecuted, and tried without a jury, for false reporting.*

What remedy is there for all this?—To appeal; but is there any legal ground for reversing the sentence? Can you prove to the Court of Cassation that the Judge summed up with gross partiality? What written evidence can you produce in that court, where oral evidence is not received? Would a Court of Assize admit upon the record a protest against the conduct of its own chief officer? Perhaps there would be no great harm in suppressing the Judge's charge altogether, in petty matters, or in trials connected with politics or the press; and it is in these, it must

* The jury, in France, does not sit upon the causes brought before the Police Correctionnelle, or lesser criminal courts.

be confessed, that the summing up in the mouth of a prejudiced magistrate most frequently assumes the tone of the indictment. But if there are several prisoners, numerous accomplices, and combined offences, differing in degree; if the crime itself is of an obscure and complicated nature, if the evidence is contradictory, if the questions or counts are various and conflicting, if the trial has lasted several days, and the attention of the jury is already lost or exhausted, what can be done without a summing-up? Without it, in such a case, it would be impossible to see to the bottom of the matter; and the life and honour of the prisoners might as well be staked on the cast of a dice-box.

What means then can be devised to compel those judges to sum up with impartiality, whom the provisions of the law, and the more imperious voice of duty, do not constrain? The plan is a simple one. The trial is public, and the summing-up is an important part of the trial; the short-hand writer's notes are the most complete and accurate means of publicity; the short-hand writer ought to take down and publish all that falls from the Judge, and the public will then be able to judge him.

Nor should the Keeper of the Seals neglect to issue instructions upon instructions to repress an abuse which is breaking out on all sides, though its shocking consequences ought long ago to have been checked.

The president of a Court of Assize has not only to conduct the trial, but likewise to exercise a supreme authority in the court; and in those courts the public is unlike any other public. A few workmen out of work, a few loose women, haunters of taverns and hells, thieves at the commencement or the close of their career, men escaped from the galleys, the lazy, the good-for-nothing, and the good-for-nothing-else, squeeze their way to the foot of the staircase which leads into court. No sooner is it opened than they rush in: they press each other, they elbow, they jostle, they stand on tiptoes, and look from a distance like a black living mass, which sends



forth rude exclamations, stifled cries, coarse jokes, and a brutal hubbub of offended decency, angry oaths, and strange slang. The swindler or the assassin comes there to learn how a witness may be thrown out, how a question may be evaded, how an alibi may be invented, how a fact may be distorted, and how the criminal code may be interpreted. Another man comes in there from mere curiosity, and goes out with the temptation of crime in his heart,—a fruitful though a tainted seed. The mania of imitation drives more people into crime than all the machinery of the law, and the terrors of punishment, can deter from it. The Court of Assize is a detestable school of immorality.

Such is the back-ground of the auditory. The people—say rather the populace—stand in the pit; but ladies— ladies dressed out in their flounces, and feathers, and flowers, anxious to see and be seen—occupy the first places, the stalls of that dreadful theatre!

Women of the world are not cruel, but they are the most curious creatures in the universe: they live on emotions; they die of emotions every five minutes; they have lovers for their verses, and verses for their lovers; they must, forsooth, suffer to enjoy, and enjoy to suffer. Your woman of the world dreads nothing so much as regular hours, a sleepy existence, and the genial indolence of the boudoir and the easy chair. She is for ever on the wing from noon to night, at the theatre, at the chambers, at church, in the park, at balls,—she is always in search of whatever may excite, or amuse, or shake, or convulse, or upset her wretched body or her wretched soul. Everything she touches multiplies her existence. She rushes, with all her passion and all her spirit, into every sensation that chances to cross her,—obstacles are nothing to her: she has made up her mind to see a thing, and she will see it. She will write ten three-cornered notes, on pink paper, to the Judge, to obtain the favour of an admission and a seat—a chair—nay, a stool—at the trial. At daybreak, she leaves her soft and warm bed to wait at the door of the court: there she stands, with a keen north-easter in her teeth, and her feet in the mud; she shivers all over; the door opens; she darts on, she presses forward, she crowds, she pushes, and at last she gets in through the gendarmes and the police, and the black gowns of the bar. She hangs on the skirts of a policeman's coat, talks to him softly in his ear, and does not let him go till she is placed, and squatted at her ease, with her eye-glass at her eye, close to the prisoner and near the judges.

Mark how she follows, step by step, the living drama which is going on; mark how her bosom swells with emotion after emotion! If the prisoner has a rough beard and haggard eyes, she looks at him with the pleasure of fear,—emotion. If his cheeks are ruddy, and his hair neatly curled, "Poor fellow—a smart lad," says she; "what a pity!"—emotion. If the witnesses come in hanging their arms, and talking nonsense, she laughs in her handkerchief,—emotion. If the prisoner sobs, she falls to crying from sympathy,—emotion. If somebody in court faints, she rushes up, cuts the lace, and offers her smelling-bottle,—another sort of emotion. But unless the solid pillars of the court give way, she will not give up her seat. Her eyes are riveted to the eyes of the prisoner; she clings to his lips; she feasts upon the ineffable terrors of a human soul. The hours fly, night is coming on, the jury has retired, still she waits—she waits to hear the fatal sentence, and the convict's sigh; she catches the last flutter of that tattered conscience; she listens for his slightest exclamation,—for his stifled groan; she follows him with one long look when he is removed from the dock, till the prison doors turn upon their hinges, and then she falls back on her chair, absorbed, overpowered, by what she has seen. The keeper of the court is obliged to tell her that the court is cleared, and to show her the way out. She drags herself along the passages of the building; she gets home, worn out, tired to death, her nerves shattered, her soul afflicted, and throws herself on her bed. Still she shudders; she is flushed; she turns pale with imaginary horror;

she sees the dungeon, the fetters, the court, the accuser, the headsman, the guillotine—she screams with agony!—A worthy woman!

What have those golden clasps, those circlets of pearl, those flowers, that finery, those floating plumes, to do amidst the mournful solemnities of a criminal court? Is the prisoner there to play a part? Is the dock a stage? Who can assure me, that at the sight of this curious and brilliant assembly, the sufferer in his prison dress will not be disconcerted, that the witness will not forget what he was going to say, and that the jury may not be more attracted by the blushing emotion of a pretty woman, than by the anguish of the prisoner?

If I had the honour to be the president of a Court of Assize, I would admit no women there, except the relations of the prisoner; and I should address all the others in some such language as the following:—"Ladies, sitting as well as standing, listen to what I am going to say. Do you go home to knit stockings for your sons, and you to get up fine linen with your daughters; do you take care that the joint is not burnt to-day; you, that your floors are swept and smooth; you, that there is oil enough in the lamps, and salt enough in the soup; do you throw in the proper hues and shades into your worsted work; you may strut the stage with the air of an old coquette; you may do your scales, and you make capers. Ladies, retire! Judging has nothing to do with the Graces; and the fairer half of the human race are out of their place in a Court of Assize. Officer in waiting, clear the court."

Such would be my orders, and I believe they would be approved of by all respectable people.

The Chief Judge has likewise a few secondary duties to perform. He ought to give the witnesses,—who are astonished by the novelty and solemnity of a court of justice, and embarrassed by the presence of judge and jury, by the nature of their evidence, or by the consequences of their oath,—he ought to give them ample time to recover themselves, and to be sure of their memory and their voice. He ought to address them with clearness and mildness; and, if it be necessary, repeat the questions put to them. He ought to have the seats so arranged that the prisoner may see the jury, as well as be seen by them; for the jury are the judges. A frown, a wink, a look, may warn the prisoner that he is going too far; that he is getting wrong; that he is injuring himself. He ought, from time to time, to have the windows of the court set open. These salutary precautions are too much neglected. Fancy the condition of a prisoner coming out of a moist, chill cell, wasted by sleepless nights, emaciated, weak, sick at heart, and hardly able to collect himself in the dense, close atmosphere of the court; the whole auditory reeks and steams; the Judge should have pity on the prisoner, but pity too on the public, though nothing is less thought of.

I pause, for all cannot be said. Our criminal law, our criminal procedure, our jurisprudence, the conduct of the trial, the jury-lists, the appointment and duties of the accusing and the presiding magistrate, the health and convenience of the courts,—all these things are somewhat behind-hand in the great race of improvement; but public opinion, the queen of free countries, watches over France with a hundred never-closing eyes, in the stillness of the night and in the turmoil of the

day. Public opinion, morally as well as physically, does more than half of what the police ought to do. Nothing escapes her control, neither ministers, nor kings, nor deputies,—those kings of another kind; whichever way they turn, public opinion is by their side, with her goad in her hand. It is not good for themselves or for us that the judicial powers should slumber on the Bench.

I am but a fly: I buzz, I teaze, but I arouse.







THE ACTRESS'S MOTHER.

BY L. COUAILHAC.



LADIES of a certain stamp in France, such as the Actress's Mother, very frequently go by the name of Madame de Saint Robert. The Actress's Mother is generally fifty years of age, having the last remnants of a sensitive heart, and a daughter upon whose head all her hopes repose.

Madame de Saint Robert has been, formerly, either a low-comedy actress, who, in waiting-maid's parts, was the delight of Vitry-le-Français, Quimper-Corentin, Oudenarde, and other French towns of about the same importance; or a worn-out coquette, who, under the elder branch of the Bourbons, obtained the direction of a lottery-office, by means of the patronage of some old Chevalier of St. Louis, and who has been driven from her dingy Temple of Fortune by the late vote of the Chamber of Deputies; or an ex-house-porteress from the Rue Coquenard, who has "given the very last rag off her back" to obtain for her "darling daughter" admission into the classes of the *Conservatoire*, and insure her a brilliant position in the world. Madame de Saint Robert, however, avows none of these origins. Since her daughter Aurelia's first appearance upon the stage, with "great applause," she considers them all much "too low" for her. It is absolutely necessary that she should have a "life and adventures" of her own, of purer alloy than

such as these; and she consequently has had the following history drawn up by a street-scrivener, which she has learnt by heart, and doles out upon every occasion.

"M. de Saint Robert, in the time of the empire, was an officer in the regiment of the *vieille garde*. His personal appearance was so prepossessing that he was always called 'the handsome Saint Robert;' and many a time did the *petit caporal*, when reviewing his 'staunch old boys,' give him a little familiar tap upon the cheek. All these different circumstances determined me upon granting him my hand, in spite of the opposition of all the members of my noble family, who had just returned from emigration, and who were *infested* with all manner of prejudice. My Aurelia was the issue of this union. Poor child! Heaven did not grant her a father long!"

At this point of her narrative, Madame de Saint Robert pulls a large blue-checked pocket-handkerchief out of her bag, wipes away two very convenient tears which roll down her wrinkled cheeks, and then goes on again.

"The fatal expedition to Russia," she continues, "was resolved upon by the *grand homme*. M. de Saint Robert, who formed a part of the advanced guard, entered Moscow one of the first, and left it the last. Heaven had destined him a grave among the snows of Russia! At the passage of the Beresina, the frozen surface of the stream cracked on all sides around him; he almost touched the opposite bank; one step more, and he would have been saved! On a sudden, he heard behind him a cry of despair from one of his comrades: he turned to fly to his rescue. Vain heroism!—the river opened, and engulfed them both!"

And here Madame de Saint Robert again pulls her large blue-checked pocket-handkerchief out of her bag, wipes away two fresh tears, and then goes on again.

"Become a widow, I devoted myself to the education of Aurelia, whom I brought up in the practice of every virtue, and in the love of the arts; and, as she displayed the most unquestionable talent for the stage, I did not hesitate a moment, without any regard for my noble and powerful family, to destine her for the dramatic career. Scarcely had the name of Aurelia de Saint Robert appeared upon the bills, when I received from St. Petersburg a threatening letter from my cousin Pamela, who had married a great Russian, the Prince Trombollinoi; and so I went immediately to my friend the commissary of police, who told me to live in tranquillity and peace, under the protection of the laws of my country."



Madame de Saint Robert here takes a long pinch of snuff, blows her nose as loudly as she can, and adds, by way of peroration, "And that's the long and the short of it."

We are not aware that these last words are to be found in the scrivener's manuscript: they have been probably considered by the old lady a necessary addition to the story, by way of a finish.

It would have been a curious sight to have seen the Actress's Mother the day

following her daughter's successful *début*,—to have witnessed the delight that sparkled in her eyes!—the air of triumph that overspread her physiognomy!—the jaunty manner of her walk! On that day, she was up by five o'clock in the morning, and straightways woke up the porteress, and the grocer, and the man at the liquor-shop, and the butcher, and the errand-boy at the corner, and to one and all she detailed the whole affair.

"Oh, my little lambkins! never was such a first appearance seen!—One round of applause after another—one after another—never was anything like it! The manager himself, worthy man, declared that he had never heard such thunders of applause within the walls of the theatre. And then the flowers!—and the compliments!—and the author of the piece, who was as red as fire—he was—and who kissed my Aurelia twice, and called her his 'guardian angel!'—his angel, d'ye hear? There was an honour! We intend to sign an engagement for fifty francs a month, the dresses provided, and her shoe-leather paid for extra. I hope I'm well recompensed for all the sacrifices I have made. But then the fact is, Aurelia danced like a little Cupid, and sang like a nightingale, with such a voice, and such a foot and ankle! So overcome was I with admiration, that, in the third act, I fainted right away in the arms of a fireman in the side-scenes,—and that's the long and the short of it!"

"And that's the long and the short of it"—has become the burden of all the old lady's narratives.

The first day of triumph may be given to joy, but the second is claimed by pride. In the first place, the Actress's Mother, who, up to this epoch, has always been called plain Madame Robert, begins to find out that her name is "a trifle vulgar." She determines, consequently, upon giving her name an aristocratic turn, and entitles herself, from that moment, Madame *de* Saint Robert, the widow of M. de Saint Robert, who, in the time of the Empire, &c. &c. [see above]. This change in her name necessarily involves a change of habitation. In fact, it would be impossible for the Actress's Mother to make all her old gossips, who are accustomed to call her Ma'ame Robert, call her Madame de Saint Robert, as long as your arm. Besides, how should she possibly give herself, at her ease, all the airs of importance necessary upon the occasion?—How toss up her head, and turn up her nose, in a quarter of the town where she has been known in such a needy state, where she has been under obligations to all the world, and where she has run most shamefully into debt with all the fruit-women, and grocers, and liquor-merchants, and similar great providers of little households? Madame de Saint Robert, therefore, leaves the Rue du Grand Hurleur to go and establish herself in the Rue de Lancry.

From that moment commences a complete change in her manner of life. Madame de Saint Robert resigns her darning, needling, or her porteress's latch-string, which were her means of livelihood until then. She arranges her red-checked shawl *à la Zamiel*, in majestic folds around her, and accompanies her daughter to every rehearsal and performance; she watches, day and night, over her precious treasure, for fear it should be carried off; she dreads, more than all, for her Aurelia attachments of the heart, and "all that sort of humbug," for the dreams in which she indulges of her daughter's future fortunes are of the most magnificent description. In

the excitement of her maternal ambition, she frequently marries her, without further ceremony, to an English *Milor*, or to a fair-haired Russian Prince, with the most extensively-padded chest, and the very smallest waist; she decks her with imaginary diamonds, sees her in vision mount into her carriage, and in spirit hails her *Madame la Duchesse*, or *Madame la Princesse*. Her fears may be well imagined, consequently, lest some "Jessamy-fellow," by means of "honied words and murderous glances," should contrive to overthrow all this magnificent scaffolding of soft illusions. She trots after her Aurelia into the green-room, and into the dressing-room, and into the manager's room, and behind the scenes. She never quits her for a moment, until she is actually upon the stage, and then only stops upon the extremest verge of a side-scene. Her chief fears fall upon the dramatic authors, the newspaper critics, and the green-room loungers. As soon as she sees Aurelia in anything like close talk with any of those gentlemen, she hastily interposes her own person, and has her little word to add to the conversation. But the devil is sharper still, and Aurelia is both woman and actress. She is generally won either by sentiment or vanity; and at the very moment that her worthy mamma is honouring with her especial attention M. Alfred Ressigeac, the youthful editor of a twopenny theatrical observer, whose assiduities to her daughter she has remarked, and whom she particularly mistrusts on account of his interesting attitudes, and his flattering critiques, Aurelia falls into the net of M. Charles Lousteau, an author famous for his long black locks, and eccentric dramatic productions. The bait was a new part in a new play. No scandal runs so quickly as green-room scandal. The next day the fall of the charming and cruel Aurelia is the general topic of the day, in green-room, saloon, side-scene, and manager's box; and as there is nowhere any lack of "good-natured friends" and charitable souls, especially under the histrionic mask, "mamma" is not long before she hears the fatal news: but she neither lets fall her long hair adown her shoulders, in sign of mourning, like a Grecian mother, nor covers her head with ashes, nor seeks to starve herself and die; she utters neither malediction nor groan; she lets fall only the simple exclamation of "The dirty blackguard!"—never says a word to Aurelia; and acts upon the principle of the proverb, "What cannot be cured must be endured." The only difference is, that the views of Madame de Saint Robert are now turned in another direction. She disposes of her existence, and arranges her future destiny, according to the circumstances. Her dreams are no longer of marriage, but "protection;" and, as a breach has now been battered in her maternal affection, and its native purity despoiled by egotism,—as henceforward her own interests have a right to occupy as large a share of her thoughts as those of her daughter,—the visions of her mind no longer picture forth the fair-haired Russian Prince, with the very small waist, above mentioned, but



some banker from Amsterdam or Frankfort-on-the-Maine, excessively bald and enormously corpulent. In order to make way for this ton of gold, she must first get rid of the "happy man" of the day, M. Charles Lousteau, the author so famous for his long black locks, and eccentric dramatic productions. To effect this purpose, all the powers of malicious contrivance which nature has allotted to the Actress's Mother are called into play. She sends M. Charles upon a walk to the garden of the Luxembourg, while Aurelia is at the Tuileries; she begs for the favour of his arm to go and see the Luxor Obelisk, or the Arch of Triumph, at the other end of the Champs Elysées; she talks to him in every tone of lamentation of her daughter's shocking debts; she shuts the door in his face when he calls, and tells him the next day that she took him for a creditor: so that, at last, M. Charles Lousteau, alarmed by these frequent appeals to his empty purse, fatigued with his sentimental promenades with the mamma, and irritated by the cool reception of Aurelia, who has been very adroitly set against him by her mother's manœuvres, all at once gives up the game; and a few days afterwards, upon the same place which he usually occupied upon the modest sofa of yellow calico, may be seen an abdomen of very prominent proportions, surmounted by a sort of awkward attempt at something like a human face, and terminated below by a pair of very short, little legs. This thing is a banker. The creditors are paid, the rooms new furnished, a real Cashmere shawl replaces the humbler "Ternaux," and Madame de Saint Robert is triumphant!



Here, however, an explanatory digression is necessary, in order to unravel the inevitable confusion which takes place in the two great varieties of the species of the Actress's Mother,—the veritable mother, the mother direct, the maternal mother, if I may so call her, and the mother that is "jobbed."

A few words will explain the nature of the mother upon hire. There may be seen "about town," in Paris, a generation of old women with well-pimpled noses and shoeing-horn chins, who form, upon the whole, a very numerous legion. They have neither family, friends, nor acquaintances. No one has any cognizance of their previous lives; no one can ever recollect to have seen them young. One might almost imagine—Heaven forgive me!—that they had fallen from the sky one fine day, all wrinkled and decrepit, like a shower of toads; or rather had issued, one dark winter's night, out of some vent-hole of the "realms below," astride upon enormous broomsticks. They all of them wear faded pink hats, worm-eaten puce silk gowns, patent pattens, tricoloured umbrellas, and spectacles. They are to be met with by day in the Palais Royal, or upon the Boulevarts, warming their withered carcasses in the sun. These old harpies adore the society of the queens of the theatrical world; and whenever a young girl with a pretty face, a well-turned foot and ankle, and an agreeable figure, has made a successful first appearance upon a

Parisian stage, and passed advantageously through the ordeal of opera-glasses, from the stage-boxes and the stalls, she is sure to have a call the following morning from an old woman, exactly corresponding to the description just given, who looks upon her with an air of compassion, and then commences the conversation in a wheedling tone :—

" My dear child," she says, " you are now launched, at a very tender age, upon a sea fertile in wrecks. You need a pilot. I am exactly what you want. I will be a mother to you."

With that she embraces her impromptu daughter with a tear in her eye, and goes to see after the kitchen. With her you may be sure of one fact: if the poor little actress has not yet fallen, her fall, at least, is not far off.

A mother " upon hire" is generally paid a hundred francs a month, and expects, besides her little profits, her coffee every morning, and considerate treatment. On her own part, propriety of appearance and decent dress are indispensable.

At the pitch to which Aurelia has arrived, and after all the sacrifices so comfortably made by the virtuous scruples of Madame de Saint Robert, there exists no longer any difference between herself and the mother by adoption. Every shade of distinction has disappeared, and all is merged in the one qualification of the Actress's Mother.

To continue. At ten o'clock in the morning, Madame de Saint Robert gets up, and forthwith kneels down by her bed-side, and thanks God for having bestowed upon her so excellent and meritorious a daughter. With this act of thanksgiving, she commences her day; and then, with a cotton 'kerchief upon her head, and a very greasy dressing-gown wrapped around her, she trots down into the kitchen, where she superintends the preparations for breakfast. After having fed her parrot, and her canaries, and her cat, and her hideous little black dog, she turns her thoughts to Aurelia. She inquires of the maid whether " the gentleman" is there (" the gentleman," by the way, cannot abide the sight of her), and carries a cup of chocolate to her daughter's bed-side. There is no end then to her little endearments, and her tender admiration of her child: she bepraises her hair, and her teeth, and her complexion. " And only think," she adds, " that she should be as like as two peas to her big blackguard of a father!" And then she flings her arms about her daughter's neck, and kisses her over, and presses her to her heart, and calls her " her darling, her duck, her little cosset, her precious treasure," until Aurelia, fatigued with all these demonstrations of affection, which are renewed every morning with the same vivacity, and about the same sincerity, says, with the greatest possible respect, " Mamma, can't you just make yourself scarce?"

Aurelia has the greatest confidence in her own maid, Mademoiselle Félicité. It is she who aids her to conceal from her mother's eyes, and those of her " protector," all the little joys and petty intrigues which form the incidental interest of her existence. Her preference for her maid betrays itself every moment, and " mamma," consequently, is terribly jealous of the favourite. She is always scolding and snubbing her; and is sure, on all occasions, to discover something to find fault with in her work. Every time her daughter is on the point of entering on the stage, she never fails of exclaiming,—" What a figure, to be sure, Félicité has made of you!

Only look at the way she has arranged this fold! and this hump on your back! Was ever such a horror seen? Take my word for it, you will never make any thing of that stupid slut!" But Aurelia turns a deaf ear; and she has her own reasons for so doing. As to Félicité, sure of an influence based upon the secrets she has in her possession, she sets herself up audaciously against Madame de Saint Robert; she answers her with insolence; she affects to regard her with looks of bravado and contempt: and, in the midst of all the immoralities of such a life, this daily war, carried on between the mother and the maid, and constantly terminating in favour of the latter, is not the least immoral trait: it is, however, one of the inevitable consequences of the respective positions of these three persons. Any one of the laws of society once trodden under foot, it is vain to think of claiming the benefit of the rest. One mesh in the net let fall, the whole unravels. Where the opinion of the world has been disdained, the world repays in kind; and he who has disdained it, becomes a "paria," beyond the pale of social arrangements. For him, man's respect, rank, distance, the distinctions of education, position, fortune, exist no longer. Oh! vice is a merciless leveller!



Twelve o'clock arrives, and it is time to start for the theatre. There is generally a rehearsal of some new play, in which Aurelia has a very important part. Madame de Saint Robert invariably accompanies her daughter: it is more decorous. Besides, she likes being seen with Aurelia: her maternal pride is agreeably flattered, whenever she perceives the eyes of the persons she meets fixed with curiosity upon her cherished offspring. On such occasions she holds up her head; she marches with a grave and triumphant step; her face beams with joy; and, if she might, she would shout out in the street to inform every passer-by—"Yes, gentlemen, it is Aurelia de Saint Robert, who acts at the ——— Theatre, and was so immensely applauded in such-and-such a piece,—and I am her mother, gentlemen!"

On arriving at the theatre, Madame de Saint Robert gives a little dry nod to the stage-door porteress, one of the ruling powers of the scene, with whom she has long been upon bad terms. It would be difficult, however, to cite in the whole theatre a single person with whom she stands upon an amicable footing: her sour temper places her in a state of open hostility with the whole human race. She has quarrelled with the box-keepers—she has quarrelled with the prompter—she has quarrelled with the stage-carpenter—she has quarrelled with the leader of the band—she has quarrelled with the understrappers, one and all! As soon, therefore, as she makes her appearance at the theatre, a most expressive grimace is visible upon the physiognomy of all around.

In one of the passages Aurelia is met by the stage-manager, looking half-scared.

"Ah! there you are at last, Mademoiselle Aurelia," he exclaims. "I was going

to send to your lodgings for you. You are more than a quarter of an hour too late!"

"Well! and if we are, what harm!" retorts the mother, sharply. "What a pucker he's in, the poor dear man! One would think the world was at an end! Respectable folks must have their time, let me tell you. We are not, thank Heaven! like your cross-grained animal of a *danseuse*, who breakfasts upon nothing better than a bunch of radishes, in order to lay by in the Savings' Bank, and never puts on her stays at home, for fear of the wear and tear!"



"It is not you I am speaking to, ma'am, but your daughter."

"But it is I who choose to answer, ***mon cher***. Although things *are* come to a pretty pass now-a-days, a mother's always a mother."

"Mademoiselle Aurelia," says the stage-manager, turning to the daughter, "we shall be forced to put on the fine."

"Well! and if you do," resumes the mamma, "your fine shall be paid. *Parole d'honneur!* a poor actress' pay is all taken off in fines—and pretty pay it is, after all. Never mind, we are not reduced yet to live upon nut-shells. Pretty airs the fellow gives himself! *Parole d'honneur!* he is like as two peas to the frog in the fable, puffing and blowing like that!—but it 's beneath one's notice, *parole d'honneur!*"

The stage-manager shrugs his shoulders, and Aurelia half dies with laughing.

The manager and the author of the new piece have been waiting for some time on the stage, giving frequent signs of impatience, and let fall a most expressive "Ah!" when Aurelia makes her appearance. The manager, however, seems by no means pleased on seeing Madame de Saint Robert. The Actress's Mother is one of the manager's natural antipathies. He knows to his cost that she brings in her train noise, confusion, and dispute; that she can never hold her tongue, and is sure to disturb all the rehearsals and readings of a new piece; that Aurelia, in fact, would be an excellent member of his company, if her mother were not continually putting fancies in her head, and disaffecting her towards the management of the theatre. On all these manifold accounts he would be delighted if Madame de Saint Robert could be refused admission to the stage: but it is impossible. Aurelia, in signing her engagement, has stipulated that her mother should accompany her. Almost all the French actresses of easy morals demand a free admission at the stage door, both for their mother and their "gentleman." One of the two, certainly, appears rather out of place.

"Come, let's begin," cries the manager.

"Sir, if you please," says Madame de Saint Robert, who is not one to let go her hold easily, "you would do well to recommend your stage-manager to be a little more gallant with the ladies. He has treated my daughter and me so shockingly, that I thought the poor dear child would have gone into fits."



THE ACTRESS.

"Very well, ma'am, that will do."

"And as for your fine—your fine shall be paid. We are not reduced yet to live upon nutshells."

Madame de Saint Robert then goes and takes her seat in a box, in order to admire her daughter, and see the new piece quite at her ease. But she cannot possibly remain on her seat all alone without communicating her sentiments, or confiding her spiteful observations to some ready ear. She catches sight, on the other side of the orchestra, of Madame de Saint Julian, the mother of another actress, who stutters so that she cannot pronounce two words together. With her she can have all the advantages of the conversation to herself: and so she hastens to the side of Madame de Saint Julian.



The overture is about to commence, and the orchestra is preluding a few notes.

"*Bon*," says Madame de Saint Robert, "I am just in time—ha! ha!"

"Silence!" cries the stage-manager.

A tremendous crash of kettle-drums announces the opening of the overture.

"Well! there!" says Madame de Saint Robert, "if it isn't exactly the same in 'Bugg or the Japonese.'"

"Silence!" cries the stage-manager.

The curtain rises. An entirely new scene displays all its magnificence at the back of the stage. The privileged spectators, scattered here and there in the boxes, hail it with two or three rounds of applause. The manager and author of the piece congratulate the scene-painter, and shake hands with him heartily.

"And a pretty sort of a scene it is, after all," says Madame de Saint Robert. "Why, I have seen better than that in my days at the *Panorama Dramatique*."

"Silence!" cries the stage-manager.

The play begins. Aurelia, who has a first-rate part in the piece, spares neither arms nor lungs to please the author. Her voice gets a little hoarse, and all on a sudden, in the midst of a speech full of passion and pathos, her mother interrupts her with the exclamation, "Take a few of your acidulated drops, my love;—I have put a whole paper-full in your bag—they will do you good, my dear."

"Silence!" cries the stage-manager.

"Silence there!" re-echoes the manager; "silence, Madame de Saint Robert. It is impossible to go on rehearsing so."

"Well! I shall hold my tongue. One would think, to hear them, that it was a crime to do one's own child a little good."

The plot of the piece becomes more complicated: and one of the characters is stabbed to the heart by the traitor's dagger.

"Well! there!" continues Madame de Saint Robert, aloud, "it's exactly the same thing in 'Cardaillac,'—and that's what you have for your money."

"Silence!" cries the stage-manager.

"This is insupportable!" exclaims the author of the piece.

"Positively insupportable!" chimes in the manager. "In Heaven's name, can't you hold your tongue, Madame de Saint Robert?"

"As if I could'nt hold my tongue if I pleased."

The manager grows furious; and, if he were not afraid of disobliging Aurelia, who has almost all the weight of the piece upon her shoulders, and depriving her of the energy necessary for the performance, he would beg Madame de Saint Robert to walk out of the theatre.

The piece continues—the interesting moment arrives, when the heroine throws herself into the hero's arms, and swears to die rather than give her hand to the villain, whom she hates and despises.

"Well, there!" recommences Madame de Saint Robert, aloud; "they call that new, do they? Why, I have seen that in 'Tekeli,' and I have seen it in 'Fitz-Henry,' and I have seen it in the 'Ruins of Babylon,' and I have seen it in the 'Poor Shepherd,' and then they have the effrontery to call that a new piece! Upon my word!"

"Silence!" cries the stage-manager.

"There is no standing it any longer," exclaims the author of the piece.

"No, positively—there's no standing it any longer," chimes in the manager. "Madame de Saint Robert, it is with infinite regret,—but really I shall be obliged to ask you to quit the house."

"Me quit the house!" cries Madame de Saint Robert, springing up with lightnings in her eyes, "I should like to see you make me quit the house! That's the respect you have for my sex and my grey hairs—to treat me like a brute beast! And if I were to quit the house, my daughter should go with me, and never set foot again in your dirty barn—and that's what she should!"

Aurelia makes signs to her mother to be pacified, and the old lady sits down again grumbling. The manager and the author swallow their wrath as best they may.

In spite of the severe and repeated admonitions which she has received, Madame de Saint Robert, nothing daunted, is far from moderating the fire of her criticism. One of the actors gesticulates like a telegraph—one of the actresses is as cold as ice—one of the best points in the plot is pillaged from M. de Pixericourt (the great melodrame manufacturer of his day)—one of the new scenes would be hissed at the very lowest theatre in Paris. At last the manager, driven out of all patience, entreats Aurelia to get rid of her mother. Aurelia goes round to her, and persuades her to go and wait till the termination of the rehearsal in the green-room. At length she retires, not, however, without crying, as loud as she can, "Well, I'm going, but it is to please my daughter, and not you—impertinent pack of fellows:—to treat a poor female in that manner;—and they call themselves Frenchmen, do they?—pretty Frenchmen!"

In the green-room, Madame de Saint Robert stamps and scolds for a time alone. But, at last, she can rest no longer without some confidential bosom into which to pour the torrent of her wrath, and she seeks in every hole and corner of the theatre

for a living being. At last she descries a lamp-lighter, quietly occupied in trimming the stage lamps for the evening's performance. That is quite enough for her; she makes up to him immediately, and, without leaving him time to breathe, launches out into her invectives.



"He's a beauty—your ape of a manager! about as polite as a Hottentot. It is since he has been living with that Ma'amselle Leonide, I suppose, that he has learnt these sort of manners. Upon my word, a very charming school. Why! the creature's mother sold kitchen stuff in the market: like mother like daughter. After all, he is no better than she; birds of a feather flock together; a word to the wise, you know."

Madame de Saint Robert would go on for hours, talking, after the same fashion, to the astounded candle-snuffer, did not the signal for the conclusion of the rehearsal sound upon her ear. She hastens on to the stage. In one of the passages she meets the "tiger" of her daughter's "protector," who informs her that his master's carriage is below, and that, as the weather is fine, "the ladies" are invited to make use of it for a drive in the Bois de Boulogne. At this intelligence, Madame de Saint Robert quickens her step and advances triumphantly upon the stage, followed by the tiger. She throws a disdainful glance upon manager, stage-manager, and author, jostles insolently all the females standing in her way, and calls out to Aurelia, with an air of grandeur, "Come, child, our carriage is waiting."

She hurries away her daughter with all possible *fracas*, springs into the carriage, with a patronising wave of the hand to all the actors and actresses grouped at the windows of the theatre, and calls out to the coachman, "To the Bois de Boulogne—by the Rue de Lancry."

The coachman hesitates for a moment, for the Rue de Lancry is not exactly the straightest way from the Boulevarts to the Bois de Boulogne. But Madame de Saint Robert calls out again in an angry tone, "By the Rue de Lancry—don't you hear—fellow?"

The coachman hesitates no longer. He would drive to the Bois de Boulogne by the other end of Paris if he were ordered. It is the horses who have all the fatigue. Off they start for the Rue de Lancry, and there, in passing before the house in which she lives, Madame de Saint Robert does all she can to be remarked by all her neighbours. She enjoys to her heart's content the marks of admiration bestowed by the tradespeople whom she honours with her custom, and the more humble lodgers, who live upon the floors above her. But she is excessively mortified at not seeing in her balcony the comptroller's lady who lives on the first floor, who is "so mighty proud of her husband," and who has never condescended to take any notice of her advances.

At the Bois de Boulogne, Madame de Saint Robert is "bored to death." All the world of fashionables around her, whom she does not know, and with whom

she has never lived, is nothing to her. She feels herself ill at ease in the presence of their grand aristocratic manners, and their style of dress—so simply elegant, so nobly worn. It is no good her having put on her yellow hat and feathers, and her Cashmere shawl with broad gold palm leaves, and her pink and silver gown—all her glittering finery, in fact, the somewhat faded elements of which she has culled out of the cast-off dresses, and old theatrical wardrobe of her daughter; she is unable to muster up her usual assurance—she feels that she is not in her place. Her delight would be, if she could, to drive, in all her splendour of recent date, to Belleville, to the Rue du Grand Hurleur, to any other of the suburban localities of Paris, where she once occupied the humblest grade in life, and where her former miserable state has not been yet forgotten.

The carriage drives home. Then follow all the voluptuous delights of dinner; for, in addition to her other qualities, the Actress's Mother possesses a considerable tendency to gluttony. After the dinner comes the coffee—and after the coffee, the *pousse-café*, consisting in three glasses of *liqueur des îles*, of the strongest possible manufacture—and then the "ladies" start for the theatre for the performance of the evening.

Madame de Saint Robert, whose head is now a little affected, is still more insupportable than she was in the morning. She sits down in a corner of her daughter's dressing-room to superintend her toilet; and there she never allows the maid or the dressing-woman of the theatre a single moment's peace. She attacks them incessantly, and quarrels with them for every trifle. Sometimes it is the sleeve that does not sit well—and then it is the petticoat that is too high—or the headdress that is too low—and then again the rouge that is badly put on. Happily they have been long accustomed to let her scold in her corner all alone, and pay no more attention to her than if she did not exist.

Ding, ding, ding, ding, goes the prompter's bell; and a rough voice from the bottom of the stairs calls out to ask whether the ladies are ready.

"No, they are not," cries Madame de Saint Robert, rushing to the staircase, with a screeching voice, which contrasts drolly enough with the stentorian tones of the overgrown call-boy. "My daughter is not ready—it is all very well for those who have nothing to put on their backs to be ready in an hour. What's the good of hurrying one in that way."

At last Aurelia comes down. "Mamma" follows her, takes a chair out of the green-room, and, in spite of the manager's prohibition, seats herself in one of the front wings, in order to be able to judge of the effect of the piece. There she finds three or four old chattering hags already installed, and among them Madame de Saint Julian. The stage-manager at last discovers this brood of old women, and routs them all out: they do no more, however, than transport their penates to the other side of the stage, whither they are again pursued by the stage-manager.

"Ladies, you know very well," he angrily exclaims, "that it is not allowed to sit in the wings in that way. Carry your chairs back to the green-room."

"Very well, sir! very well, sir!" replies Madame de Saint Robert. "We are not going to eat your chairs or your wings."

Away flies the whole covey of old women again before the stage-manager, and settles quietly down in the same spot as at first. The manager has sent for their persecutor to his room; and they are left in peace for a few minutes, at least. A circle is formed, that one might fancy a round of witches. An animated and rapid conversation ensues, the web of which is of the most entangled description. All the good ladies want to be heard at once. Madame de Saint Julian can never contrive to finish a sentence: before she has done stammering out her first word, her neighbour has let loose a score or two; and she thus never gets beyond her exordium. Would that she could find imitators among several orators of my acquaintance, whom I could name if I would.



Each of the old ladies recounts, for the fiftieth time at least, the history of her life. One of them is the widow of a banker, who lost all his fortune in the Spanish funds; another is the daughter of a lady of rank, who never told her name, and who put her out to board, up to the age of twenty, at a baker's at Courbevoie, and then, all at once, ceased to give any further news of herself. [Marks of surprise and indignation from the auditors]. A third declares that she should have been immensely rich, if, in the year 1815, the Cossacks had not discovered the spot where she had buried all the wealth she had won in the lottery. As to Madame de Saint Robert, she repeats her history of her unfortunate alliance with M. de Saint Robert, the finest man in the *vieille garde*, and the favourite of the Emperor Napoleon.

After all these oft-told tales, as the piece is not yet begun, other topics of conversation are resorted to.

"And tell me, Ma'ame St. Julian," says Madame St. Phar, "where did you buy your dress?"

"At Ma'ame Ca-ca-ca-ca-"

"Ah! Madame Cabot's—I understand," interrupts Saint Phar; "it must have cost you fifty sous the ell at least."

"No, f-f-f-f-"

"Ah! forty, I understand, and no great bargain either. To be sure! how they do rob the poor people now-a-days! and one of your fading colours too—that will never wash, you may take my word for it. Look here; here's a colour for you—and never cost but thirty-five—and just feel—that's what I call something like!"

"I'm sure I don't know how you manage, Ma'ame Saint Phar," snaps Madame de Saint Robert, "but you always get your things cheaper than any one else."

"It's because I hunt about, my dear Ma'ame—there is no better hand at a bargain than I."

Silence!—the three blows on the stage, the usual signal for commencement in the

French theatres, are struck: and the new piece, upon which the manager founds the most immense hopes, appears at last before the public.

Neither Madame de Saint Robert nor Madame de Saint Phar fail in giving their tongues free swing during the course of the performance.

"Just look at Leonide," says the former, "there's a figure! she calls those hips, does she! Why, she might as well have stuffed out her gown on either side with a couple of deal boards. Ha! ha! ha!"

"And Francine!" resumes Saint Phar. "There's an affected minx for you, making eyes at the young fellows in the stage boxes; it's really indecent, upon the word of an honest woman, it is. Oh! if I had anything to do with affairs here, her gray hairs should'nt grow on these boards."

"I say, Ma'ame Saint Phar, did'nt you hear a hiss?"

"What already! we are only at the second act."

"I told them this morning that the piece was'nt worth a sou."

"Bon! there's Alfred broke down in his long speech—Well! I'm not sorry for it; ever since that fellow has taken to act a tragedy part or two, there's no coming near him—he's as proud as you please!"

"I say! Ma'ame Saint Phar! they are hissing again. The piece would be damned to a certainty if my daughter were not there to carry it off."

"Your daughter! Ma'ame Saint Robert: I didn't wish to make an unpleasant remark just now, but it seems to me that she did not go down with the public at all to-night, when she first went on."

"What! my daughter!" screams Madame de Saint Robert; "why you must be deaf; she was applauded enough to bring the whole house down."

"Yes, by the *claqueurs*, Ma'ame, not by the veritable audience. It's not like my daughter, my Eugenia! What a triumph she had last night! Her *claqueurs* were the whole house, Ma'ame, the people in the boxes, and the stalls, and the stage-boxes. That's what I call applause."

"Saint Phar! I'm perfectly astonished at you! As if every one did'nt know how far your daughter's talents go. Why! she does'nt even know how to walk yet."

"At any rate she'll never learn that of your lolloping Aurelia: she does'nt walk at all; she rolls on to the stage."

"And that's better than being so thin as to poke your fellow actor's eye out with your elbows."

"Your Aurelia only gets new parts because she makes up to the authors."

"Your Eugenia would never act at all if she were not 'no better than she should be' with the stage-manager."

"Your daughter is only a makeshift."

"And yours is worse than nothing at all."

"You old fool!"

"You old pauper, you!"

Up go the "ladies'" hands: and the wordy duel would become a duel of a more serious nature, did not a fireman upon duty, like a true French cavalier, throw himself betwen the combatants.

Between the acts, Madame de Saint Robert gives a look at the theatre through the hole in the curtain, and says to her daughter, who has thrown herself into a Gothic chair, and is puffing at her ease in order to get strength to go through the last act, "Aurelia! did you see your old man in the first tier? Just give him a nice little glance from time to time: there's nothing flatters a man like that. You always look as if you did not see him, and you'll see, with all her airs and graces, Francine will carry him off from you at last; and he's a catch, my dear."

During the whole interval between the last two acts, Madame de Saint Robert watches over her daughter like a hen over her chick. There is no possibility of getting near Aurelia. Whoever advances a step towards her is sure of finding himself face to face with the mamma: and then there is nothing to do but to retreat. The fact is, that the Actress's Mother knows well enough that, at the first representation of a new piece, the stage swarms with authors, and newspaper critics, and artists, all clever fellows in their way, very charming, and very seductive, but little capable of rendering a woman happy, according to Madame de Saint Robert's view of the case.

"My dear child," she says to Aurelia, "take care of all those scribbling, daubing, dancing fellows, and the like: they are not the sort of people ever to find you salt for your porridge, my dear."

In the fifth act the piece recovers itself, thanks to the claqueurs: the catastrophe, warmly supported by these gentry, goes off without hindrance; and Aurelia is called out after the fall of the curtain. Madame de Saint Robert receives her all palpitating with emotion in her maternal arms, and cries out to Madame de Saint Phar, who has never budged from her corner, "I should like to see your Eugenia carry off such a triumph as that!"

Returned home, Madame de Saint Robert mixes a bowl of rum punch in order to celebrate the double triumph of the evening. About three o'clock in the morning, she regains her room with somewhat tottering steps, and goes to bed, not, however, without again thanking God for having bestowed upon her so excellent and meritorious a daughter.

I have let you know the character and habits of the Actress's Mother,—I will now tell you her end.

Aurelia, who is of a weak, lazy, careless disposition, allowing herself to float quietly down life's stream, at one time obeying her own caprices, at another the will of those around her, but always without reflection, at eight-and-twenty years of age—the very time when she ought to begin to grow a little more reasonable—is caught in the snare so much dreaded for her by her mother: she falls desperately in love with M. Victor Rousseau, an author about forty years of age, a careless, debauched, good-for-nothing, merry fellow, who makes her die of laughing every time he opens his mouth. After a youth of the most stormy nature, M. Victor Rousseau possesses about as much fortune as consists in five or six vaudevilles, a few articles for the lesser periodicals, and a host of creditors,—not quite the baggage for walking at one's ease through the dusty ways of life. Aurelia pays her Adonis's debts, and marries him. Her mother, who sees all the savings of the household daily diminishing, can keep no terms with her son-in-law; and so the married couple make

her an allowance of six hundred francs a year, upon condition that she should go and live in the Rue Copeau, Faubourg Saint Marcel, in a boarding-house for both sexes, and never recross the river.

The first moment of her rage gone by, Madame de Saint Robert grows accustomed to her exile. She becomes very devout, goes to mass every morning, and to confession twice a week; and dies in a fit the day she is told that Aurelia has a lover.





THE DILETTANTE.



THE DILETTANTE.

BY ALBERT CLER.



LONG will the important and unforeseen events produced by the French Revolution (we of course speak of the first) be felt and remembered. Not only has it effected radical changes in the whole moral, social, and political atmosphere, but, if we are to believe its opponents, it has likewise upset all order, both natural and physical. Listen to some of the people whom M. Châteaubriand calls the men of the olden time. If to-day the weather is somewhat overcast, if your umbrella is constantly in requisition, if the spring should happen to be none of the longest or the finest, or if green peas in the month of May should chance to be a dainty sought for, it is wholly to the Revolution of 89 that it is to be attributed.

Without allowing ourselves to be misled for a moment by any such exaggerations, we imagine that we have every reason for asserting that the Revolution has exercised a very strong and extraordinary influence upon Dilettantism in France. In former times people sang for singing's sake, as, indeed, birds sing, by a kind of natural instinct. The quantity of *tra de ri de ras*, of *tra la las*, of *la fari don don*, *la fari don daines*, of *ton taine*, *ton tons*, &c., which in reality formed the principal portion of the songs of the olden time, is at once proof positive that our ancestors sang without either forethought or affectation. These choruses, as far as meaning goes, forcibly remind us of the warbling of the thrush or starling.

Formerly, what has since been called the fine company-singer, was perfectly un-

known. Every body sang of love, of wine, and women, off-hand, and without ceremony, for his own personal enjoyment. It was considered rather as an affair of merriment than of the throat.

Choruses the most joyous were chanted at the conclusion of every meal, and just as naturally as canary birds would sing after they had finished eating. By way of prolonging the pleasure as much as possible, the number of verses generally averaged from fifteen to twenty, to say nothing of the obligato choruses. It might have been said at that time, that every thing concluded with songs which never did conclude.

In the time of the Republic and the Empire, the *Marseillaise*, the *Chant du Depart*, &c., gave a patriotic and warlike turn to the national melodies. After the Invasion, and in the early part of the Restoration, when *Chauvinism** had monopolized every thing, not even excepting crockery and pocket-handkerchiefs,—when people wiped their foreheads with the shred of a flag of the old guard, or the trouser leg of a Cossack,—when one used to eat creams upon the field of battle of Eylau and of Moskowa, songs were dedicated *à la Colonne, au Grognard, à la Gloire, à la Victoire*, and *aux Succès des Français*. Still more recently, thanks to Beranger, songs have been converted into a means of political opposition. At the present moment, singing has become, generally speaking, an affair of vanity, and in many instances a matter of calculation. It must be well understood, that our preceding observations, as well as those that are about to follow, do not apply in the slightest degree to professionals, who, indeed, have always formed a separate class, but merely and exclusively to amateurs.—Nobody sings at the present time but with the hope of rendering himself conspicuous—the design of making an impression. Scarcely, even in country dinner parties, is the old custom kept up of asking the guests each in turn to sing something or another; and the affectation of Dilettantism has caused the banishment, as something too vulgar for endurance, of what were formerly called songs of the table. Now, instead of songs *of* the table, there is nothing to be heard but songs *at* the table. In lieu of

> "Come, to the lasses
> Fill, fill your glasses,
> And merrily let us sing in chorus;
> Let no one refrain,
> To fill, fill again,
> As our fathers did before us,—"

people persist in chanting the most melancholy and plaintive ditties; occasionally, even the funereal cavatina sung by Rachel in "The Jewess," or by Ninetta in "La Gazza Ladra," previous to walking to execution. Very amusing this, no doubt.

Lately, at a dinner party in one of the provinces, at which we had the pleasure of being present, a local Duprez thought proper, in the midst of the dessert, to favour the company with the grand solo *Asile héréditaire*, and finished the very warlike verse "Suivez-moi" brandishing his fork, by way of a sword, in the most ferocious manner imaginable.

It is only, however, at dinner-parties in small towns, when the time arrives for every one to sing in turn, that one really sees those capital comedy scenes of which

* Chauvin was the pseudo-author of a popular song, consecrated to the glory of the French army.

Henri Monnier, in his sketch entitled *Un Diner Bourgeois*, has given so humorous and faithful a picture: one singer pretending to be diffident and nervous, and appearing as though he were anxious to decline, while he is positively broiling with impatience to make himself heard in what he considers his most striking song: another, after having been begged and entreated for above half an hour, winding up, by giving vent to a feeble and unmeaning verse; and then the young lady, constrained to sing by maternal, or, as the case may be, by paternal authority, which, with sundry variations, is conducted in the following manner:—

THE MAMMA.

Now, my love, sing us a piece.

THE DAUGHTER.

But, my dear mamma, I'm so nervous.

THE MAMMA.

Nonsense, my dear, now don't be foolish; come, get up, and hold yourself straight. Now father, you can prompt her, you know. "In vain the gentle lute."

THE FATHER (*prompting*).

"In vain the gentle lute you play."

THE DAUGHTER (*standing up and singing*).

"In vain the gentle lute I play."

THE FATHER.

"And tune in vain the roundelay."

THE DAUGHTER.

"In vain the gentle lute I play,
And tune in vain the roundelay."

THE FATHER.

"Since love thy bosom hath forsaken."

THE DAUGHTER.

"In vain the gentle lute I play,
And tune in vain the roundelay;
Since love my bosom hath forsaken."

THE FATHER.

"Music will only grief awaken."

THE DAUGHTER.

"Music will only grief awaken."

THE MAMMA (*in a pet*).

Now just be so good as to sit yourself down, miss; we have quite enough of your singing for one while. [The young lady bursts into tears.] I shall send all cry-babies out of the room directly, you may depend.

Affecting instance this of the harmony existing in families.

In Paris, similar scenes are but seldom witnessed. There, musical murders are always perpetrated in cold blood. Dillettanti amateurs, of whatever age or sex,

never thrust themselves into society without having seriously and profoundly studied their pieces. Nor are they less careful in choosing their victims. Beware of all cards of invitation, ending with the intimation that "there will be a little music." They are nothing better than ambushes.

On the whole, we much prefer the ancient custom of after-dinner songs to the modern drawing-room assemblages, got together for the purpose of assassinating one with the music of the family and neighbourhood. At table, at any rate, there were a thousand different ways of avoiding the necessary applause, and of concealing one's ennui. A glass raised to the mouth effectively concealed one's laughter, or one's gaping fits. It was easy enough to compose one's countenance while peeling an apricot or a pear, or in fidgetting with the knives and forks.

In a regular musical soirée, however, seated in arm-chair, in full view, you are exposed, without hope, refuge, or defence, to auricular martyrdom, and to the lowering looks of friends and relations. There are no possible means of avoiding the *execution*.

We will say the same of the so-called amateur concerts, which have lately increased and multiplied in a most fearful manner, and which now constitute a perfect pest, which we may term the musica-morbus.

All these frightful abuses are caused by the mania which has seized the Dilettanti of the middle classes. There is scarcely to be found a single weak-voiced drawing-room minstrel, but who is possessed with an ardent desire to make himself conspicuous; he must then of necessity be provided with an audience and applauders. This feeling has not only gained ground among young and middle-aged people, but it has likewise invaded even infancy. For some years past, every family has prided itself upon possessing among its members one or more juvenile virtuosos. The piano, the violin, the flute, and even the clarionet, have superseded, as juvenile amusements, the doll, the hoop, and the foot-ball. The study of the solfa has been substituted for Mother Goose's Tales. Pieces of music have been distributed to children, instead of pieces of bread and jam.

This it is which causes us to be surrounded, every step we take, by Malibrans and Grisis of ten years old and under, Hertzes in long petticoats, and Paganinis in frocks and trousers. These premature musicians are called little prodigies, and prodigies they doutless are,—of absurdity though.

The lower classes have not even been exempted from the Dilettante mania. They have now learnt to despise the vulgar gaiety of the songs of the good old time; they are perfectly shocked at the collections printed upon coarse paper, with common red covers, which contain the somewhat musty and stale effusions of lane and alley melodists. At the Râpée, at the Courtille, and under the pillars of the vegetable market, *pieces* are to be sung. It is not at all an uncommon thing to hear a robust Herculean porter pour forth some romantic, melancholy, consumptive ballad, or a dirty boy of the Boulevart du Temple, sing "The Sons of the Brave," or "The Page in his best Attire is decked." Take, as an example, the ballad of the Sultana,

"Araby's sweets,"

which is positively quite the rage among the venders of fried soles and red herrings.

The ambition of distinguishing one's self, more especially as a musician, has brought

to light a crowd of self-called reformers and musical revolutionists. Some three thousand years ago, Solomon exclaimed that there was nothing new under the sun: one might consequently have been tempted to believe that, after the Haydns, the Mozarts, the Beethovens, the Rossinis, &c., that there was nothing new under the seven notes of the gamut. Absurdity, Mahomets, and Martin Luthers have recently arisen, who pretend to change and overturn all ancient musical opinions and axioms, in the same manner that Sganarelle flattered himself to have changed *the heart to the left side.*

Among these new sectarians we will cite the lyrical Jacotots, who, founding their theory upon the axiom that "all is in all," pretend that music is capable of expressing every thing whatsoever,—an argument, whether it be of a theological, philosophical, political, didactical, statistical, or ecclesiastical nature, an historical fact, a parliamentary debate, a variation of half a centime in the course of the Exchange, or a telegraphic dispatch interrupted by the fog.

In order not to be accused of exaggeration, it will be quite sufficient to call to memory the programmes of concerts, in which moral or classical fantasias, and symphonies fantastical, poetical, and dramatic, are announced. The authors of these compositions not only pretend to express all the effects of physical nature, but likewise the most secret emotions and hidden feelings of the heart, the most romantic vicissitudes of human destiny, and all by means of crotchets, flats and sharps, and cadences. Thus M. Hector B—— has lately published a work with a biographical notice in symphony, intitled "Life of an Artist." Among other chapters, the explaining pamphlet indicated the description of a "*walk in the open plain;*" nevertheless, the music devoted to the subject might just as accurately have described a walk upon the top of the church of St. Sulpice.

Thus, again, a young pianist, equally remarkable for his great genius and his great head of hair, has openly declared his intention of metamorphosing his grand pianoforte into a professorship of classical knowledge. According to his system, there is not a single note, either flat or diatonic, which does not tend to render mankind more virtuous; and if occasionally he does happen to strike the keys in a way to insure their certain destruction, it is only with the view to inculcate his moral precepts with additional force.

Truly there are times when all this din of affected and tiresome music makes one almost regret the lyrical era of *La Boulangere, Le Clair de la lune*, and of *La Pipe de Tabac*. Indeed, many parents calculate upon the effects of the piano-forte, or the brilliant cavatina, as an economical means of establishing their daughters. Many amateur Duprez, trusting to the comic opera maxim, that when once the ear is enchanted, the heart will follow, endeavour to bring out the high C, with the sole intention of charming the heart of some rich heiress. O! where has the Platonic love of art for itself alone taken refuge?

We have still to mention another class of Dilettanti, who unite the double character of vanity and calculation; it is that of the sentimental ballad-singer. The profession of sentimental ballad-singing has superseded, as a means of parasitical subsistence, the old family laureates, the wit, and the anecdote-relater. The ballad-singer is now the lion of all private parties: he has his knife and fork laid at a multitude of dinner tables. He enjoys the privilege of entrance into drawing-rooms,

and even boudoirs, upon all occasions, whether great or small. He is considered and treated as a neutral being, of no possible consequence to anybody. The trade of sentimental ballad-singing requires, moreover, no other capital, or stock in trade, than a black coat nearly new, and a voice rather the worse for wear.

The sentimental ballad-singer is, generally speaking, a short, thick-set man, with large rounded shoulders, fat red cheeks, ornamented with black bushy whiskers, and an abdomen protruding like that of a corporal of voltigeurs in the National Guard. Nature intended him to be the Atlas of a wholesale grocery business, or the proprietor of an extensive waggon-office; and it is really lamentable to behold such a powerful display of muscles and sinews destined merely to sustain simple musical notes.

Nothing in nature is more amusing than to witness the pains that the corpulent minstrel takes with himself, in order to impart to his red joyous face a melancholy, languishing, or die-away expression, so as to harmonize with the songs which he is accustomed to sing. Who could scarcely refrain from laughing outright to hear him complaining of his "misery," his "despair," his "journey towards the tomb," and the "frail tenure of his existence?" Hercules with the distaff is not a whit more ridiculous than Hercules singing love songs.

Moreover, the ballad-singer possesses one peculiar advantage, viz., that of exercising a profession which happens to have no slack or dull season: he is never out of employ. He despatches the Barcarole at a fair valuation, furnishes the Tyrolienne with or without action, sobs a serenade, hums an aria, and not only transacts business in town and country, but is likewise extensively engaged in exportation. In the spring, when watering-places begin to fill, he transports all his musical baggage either to Spa, Aix, Baden Baden, Vichy, Dieppe, Mont d'Or, Neris, or Plombières.

The ballad-singer, however, contrives to return about the fall of the leaf, and makes his reappearance in all the concerts which the north wind blows back upon Paris.

Unfortunately, however, after having, year after year, been crowned with roses, the troubadour is doomed at last to approach the winter of life. He loses, nearly at the same time, his hair and his G. Then he thinks about visiting his "Normandy, dear Normandy," or indeed the country in which he first saw the light, wherever it may chance to be. There he begins to lay out the produce of his industry in the most advantageous manner, becomes one of the principal people in the village, perhaps one of the borough authorities, and churchwarden of the parish. Every Sunday he stations himself at the reading-desk, and dedicates to the praises of the Lord, and those of the rich man of the district, the remains of a voice formerly devoted to the celebration of the Zelmiras or Elviras, and the themes of laughter, smiles, and love.

Thus do the reputations and songs of this transitory world pass away. In seeking to conclude our subject in a grave and serious manner, we have happened to hit upon the discovery that singing may be employed as a means of attaining the object which, it has always been stated, is the most important in life, viz., a knowledge of ourselves and others. After an immense variety of arguments and deductions, we believe ourselves fully justified in laying down this new axiom, that, as in the bird tribe the voice corresponds with the plumage, so in the human race the voice cor-

responds with the appearance; and that any one can say, from hearing a man sing, he is a brave fellow, or he is a surly rascal, or he is an idiot, as upon hearing the slightest sound of their voice, we proclaim the bird to be a cock, a crow, or a canary bird.

We hasten to add, that the honour of the invention does not exclusively belong to us. Before our time, two great geniuses, Shakspeare and Châteaubriand, had already applied the subject of music to the study of the human heart. Shakspeare, it is true, confined himself to pointing it out as a means of negative condemnation when he said,—

> "The man who has no music in his soul
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils:
> Let no such man be trusted."

Nevertheless it follows, that if the author of Hamlet had had any hand in the publication of the penal code, he would have placed every one who did not like music under the inspection of the high police authorities.

M. Châteaubriand has gone somewhat farther. He has remarked that countrymen, shepherds, and indeed all those who sing from instinct alone, always prelude in a minor key; and that the air of all pastoral complaints is of the same plaintive character. The author of Atala has inferred from this, that "the chord of grief is the most natural to the heart of man." Thus, supposing that the great poet had suddenly fallen upon our earth from the etherial regions, he would have been able to guess immediately that we were subject to death, to pain, to toothache, to melodramas, to romances run wild, to asphalte and bitumen, to share companies, and to National Guard patrols,—and all this from hearing a countryman sing in E flat. Verily, genius is a wonderfully fine thing!

We have taken the liberty, in some remarks upon singing, to glean after these two great men; and here follow a few of the discoveries which we believe ourselves to have made, relative to the concordance which exists between the moral conduct of men and their vocal and instrumental habits.

Whenever you hear one of your fellow-citizens invariably prelude by commencing with the middle notes, and breaking off, with a good deal of self-satisfaction, in the bass, after the following fashion,—

> "La, la, la ———,"

the last notes muttered tremolo, and appearing to issue from his cravat, you may say truly, "This man is a grocer—a Bœotian."

He who, in company, presumes so far as to sing three verses of a ballad, you may set down as a person having a strong natural bias towards making himself dull and disagreeable. As for the unhappy being who goes beyond that number, and even dares to commit the atrocity of singing as many as six, scout him at once as a being of a species most detrimental to the peace and quietness of your domestic circle,—as a person of an essentially wearying, tiresome, sickening description.

He who never attempts a tune until it has long become the exclusive property of hurdy-gurdies and hand-organs—such, for instance, as a man who would have no compunction about singing *Ma Normandie*, or *Le Postillon de Lonjumeau*,—old-fashioned, *rococo* fellow, like a bad time-piece, always behind-hand.

In certain cases, the remark ought to be taken in an inverse sense, as sometimes it may be said that singing, like words, has been given to mankind to conceal their thoughts. Thus, for instance, he who prefers warlike songs, such as *En avant, marchons contre les canons*, or the "Tartar March,"—he who, in every verse, is performing prodigies of valour, triumphs over the enemies of France, and dies for his country, may, after all, be nothing better than a braggart and a coward. To take an example of another kind: the ballad which nearly every one must recollect, *Il pleut, il pleut, bergère*, was composed by the old Franciscan, Camille Desmoulins, who, by the way, was of anything but a pastoral turn of mind.

Let us now turn to the choice of instruments, as an indication of disposition.—The trumpet, the trombone, the French horn, and the key bugle,—noisy, wild, madcap fellow, Comic Opera character in the part of a spendthrift nephew, or an officer of hussars.

He who studies the instruments that are necessary to complete the orchestra, and plays what is commonly known in theatres as the general-utility parts, such as the triangle, the kettle-drums, and the cymbals,—is doubtless a good, kind-hearted, straightforward fellow, without affectation of any kind, and always willing to do a kindness for a friend.

The bassoon,—somewhat egotistical disposition.

The clarionet,—common-place, unpoetical character, with something of a grocer-like turn of mind.

The double bass,—indication of maturity, or rather of decay. Look, indeed, into an orchestra, and it is very seldom that we do not see, above the long finger-board of this instrument, a head surmounted by a white and venerable-looking wig, and a nose which, like that of Father Aubry, is declining towards the grave.

The choice of the harp denotes a pretty but coquettish woman, seeing that it furnishes ample opportunity for the display of a finely-shaped arm, or an elegant figure: the pedals, moreover, will show off a pretty little foot to the greatest advantage. This instrument is now very generally neglected: we are not, however, so ungallant as to infer from this that the perfection of female beauty is more uncommon than it was formerly, any more than we should believe (although it has been so alleged) that the abolition of knee-breeches was a silent acknowledgment of the degeneracy of modern calves.

The lady who usurps the instruments especially intended for men, and plays upon the violin, the flute, or the double bass, has generally a strong, masculine cast of mind, and incipient moustachios. If she happen to be married, she will completely reverse the celebrated 215th article of the Civil Code, relative to conjugal obedience.

The man, *vice versâ*, who plays either upon the harp or the guitar, might, upon urgent necessity, make tapestry-work, and hem pocket-handkerchiefs.

If our system of observations were to be generally adopted, we should be obliged to say to our neighbours, not as formerly, "Tell us whom you frequent," but "Tell us what you sing, and we will tell you what you are."

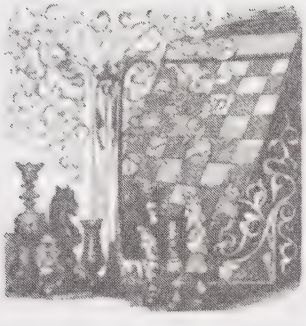


THE CHESS-PLAYER.



THE CHESS-PLAYER.

BY MÉRY.



LIKE an universal alphabet, the Chess-board is known to all nations. The Bonze plays at chess in the pagoda of Juggernaut; the palanquin-bearing slave reflects how he may best checkmate a pebble king, on a chess-board traced on the sands of the Ganges; the Icelandic bishop wiles away the tedious gloom of a polar night, with his long-calculated moves on the chess-board, commencing with that which has become identified with the name of Captain Evans: in short, from pole to pole, the sixty-four squares of the noble game have solaced the sorrows of the lords of the creation.

In the middle ages, the Chess-player travelled the world like a knight-errant, challenging emperors, kings, and mitred prelates, and acquiring wealth and honours by his victories. Boy, the Syracusan, was the most celebrated of these pacific warriors. He fought, *rook* in hand, with the Emperor Charles V., and conquered; *hand to hand* he fought with Don Juan of Austria; and that prince conceived so extraordinary a liking for both player and game, that he constructed in an apartment of his palace an immense chess-board with sixty-four squares of black and white marble, the men being of real flesh and blood, and moving at the command of the two chiefs. At the battle of Lepanto, Boy played a game of chess with Don Juan, and conquered the conqueror of the Ottomans.

At the present day, chess has lost none of its high merit, though he who sways the sceptre of the ivory kingdom may no longer enter the lists with sovereigns and popes. In Paris, in London, Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg, the most ambitious Chess-players are content with the admiration of their friends, and are often unknown beyond the precincts of their clubs. Two great men alone have crossed the seas, and their names are known even to the Indian, thus conferring additional glory on the French chess-board. The clubs of England, and the circles of Germany, furnish no rival to M. Deschapelles and M. de Labourdonnais. It has been M. Deschapelles' good fortune, in his military life, to revive, in some sort, the exploits of Boy, the Syracusan. After the battle of Jena, he entered Berlin with the victorious army of France, repaired to the amateur Chess-players' circle, and challenged the most skilful member, offering his opponent the advantage of the pawn and two moves. At this supplementary battle of Jena, the circle of Berlin was beaten singly and collectively, and M. Deschapelles ended by offering the rook. The reflective gravity which the Germans ascribe to their exact and mathematical organization, was conquered by the prompt and spontaneous calculation of the Parisian amateur.

Fifteen years have now elapsed since M. Deschapelles, the most intricate player of his day, retired from the lists. At the time we write M. de Labourdonnais sways the sceptre, and reigns absolute monarch. He is about forty-five years of age; everything about him indicates superiority. The developement of his forehead is extraordinary; his eyes, overhung by immense protuberances, seem constantly closed to all outward things, and in incessant communion with the mind within. Grandson to the illustrious governor of India, immortalized by Bernardin de St. Pierre, endowed with superior intellect and incredible application, he has never been ambitious of higher title than that of the first Chess-player in the world; and this he has achieved. All Europe knows that M. de Labourdonnais resides in Paris, at No. 1, Rue de Ménars, the splendid hotel of the Chess Club, and that he there receives challenges and gives lessons. Strangers every day arrive from all parts of France and of Europe; some, fired with the noble ambition of encountering De Labourdonnais with equal arms; others, with the humility of acknowledged inferiors, submitting to receive an advantage; all happy to make the acquaintance of, and to cross pawns with, the renowned master. The monarch refuses no duel, no proposition: he is ready at all times, and for all opponents. At noon, fierce encounters begin in the vast saloon of the Hotel de Ménars, heated to twenty degrees in the winter, and cool as a grotto in the summer. There may be seen the staff of M. de Labourdonnais, composed of the élite of amateurs, who, unassisted by their master, can beat all the players of the Westminster Club. As soon as M. de Labourdonnais sits down to play a game with an unknown visitor from London, St. Petersburg, Vienna, or La Haye, every other game is suspended; all present flock to head-quarters; the monarch and his antagonist are hemmed in; and all eyes are fixed on the unerring finger and thumb that move the victorious pawn or man. The interest attached to the amusing scenes is intense and inexhaustible; and although the profane cannot well understand such emotion, it is enough, in order to justify this interest in the eyes of those who are not organized

to comprehend it, to say, that the greatest of men have made it their favourite passion.

More successful than Napoleon, M. de Labourdonnais effected a descent in England, and conquered the Island. More fortunate in another respect, he had not to complain of his adversaries' harsh treatment, the English chess-board having no square of injustice. At the period of De Labourdonnais' visit, much was said in France of Mr. Macdonald, whose play was, by some, supposed to surpass that of the great French master. All the nabobs from Pondicherry and Calcutta, all the envoys of Lord William Bentinck, all the explorers of the Indian peninsula, all the English from the East and West Indies, protested that Macdonald, of Edinburgh, was a more skilful player than the Bramin Fla-hi, of Juggernaut; and that he would easily beat M. Deschapelles, or M. de Labourdonnais. One day, the latter quietly crossed the Channel, and repaired to London; and no sooner was his arrival at Jaunay's hotel known at the Westminster Club, than a courteous invitation was despatched to his address, and it was not long ere a sharp contest commenced between the friendly adversaries. M. de Labourdonnais found, on this occasion, an antagonist worthy of him; the English had not boasted without reason of their champion's skill. The struggle that ensued was more warm and spirited than London will probably ever witness again. Victory, however, fell to the share of the Frenchman, being clearly established by a series of brilliant and decisive moves. To the honour of England be it said, that the members of the Westminster Club bore this memorable defeat with magnanimity. They gave M. de Labourdonnais a splendid dinner at Blackwall; the toasts, in compliment to the guest, being drunk exclusively in claret and champagne.

Macdonald's death, a few years since, left the British chess-board in a remarkable state of inferiority. The last national game, played by correspondence between the Clubs of London and Paris, was marked, on the English side, by deplorable errors. In 1838, an article in the *Talamide*, commented upon by *Bell's Life*, wounded the susceptibility of the nation that reckons a Chancellor of the Exchequer* among its high dignitaries. That paper noticed M. Deschapelles' supplement to the battle of Jena. The noise of the levy of bucklers raised in Westminster, induced M. Deschapelles to emerge from his retreat, and throw down his glove in defiance of all England. Protocols were issued previously to the actual outbreak of hostilities. Deputies from the Britannic club arrived at the Hotel de Ménars, and were received with an urbanity quite chivalrous: it was agreed that diplomatic notes should be exchanged after a grand dinner at Grignon's. All the élite of Paris chess-playing society were invited to the restaurant's of the Passage Vivienne; the assemblage was composed of artists, bankers, peers, deputies, literary men, magistrates, generals, capitalists, physicians, lawyers, and the leading members of the Club Ménars, M. de Jouy taking the chair. The entertainment was a perfectly convivial one; the English drank toasts to France, and the French, to England; and when the dessert made its appearance, the guests began to grow serious, and the cartel was produced as a crowning dish. The discussion that ensued to determine

* Exchequer (*Echiquier*) means in French a chess-board.—Ed.

the principles of the war between the two nations, was prolonged till two o'clock in the morning, the finesse of the cabinet of St. James's being conspicuous on the occasion. At daybreak, the question was not advanced a stage; and it having been found impossible to come to an agreement, the treaty was broken off. M. Deschapelles, who was preparing to make his descent in England, returned to his tent; and the only result of the discussion was the reminiscence of an excellent dinner at Grignon's.

The evenings at the Club Ménars have latterly been very animated, and have moreover created a prodigious sensation beyond the precincts of the club-house, on account of the marvellous games played by M. de Labourdonnais, with his back turned towards the chess-board. Philidor*, the renowned musician and chess-player, was the originator of these incredible feats, and no one since his time thought of reviving them. M. de Labourdonnais had long pondered on the tradition, and this laurel of Philidor's frequently disturbed the monarch's sleep. One day, he attempted one of these intuitive combinations, and with complete success: the next day he played two more games on the same plan, playing out and winning both. The report of these games spread like lightning, and caused a great sensation in the chess-playing world. The doors of the Ménars Club were thrown open to amateurs and the curious, and M. de Labourdonnais twice again repeated his experiment in public. The two games were played in the billiard-room. M. de Labourdonnais seated himself in a corner, with his back towards the two chess-boards, his face turned to the wall and hidden by his hands. An amateur stood by to proclaim aloud the move made by the antagonist. M. de Labourdonnais then played in his turn, naming the piece he required to be moved, as if the chess-board had been before him. As the game drew to a close, and as the board became cleared of taken pieces, the increasing intricacy of the position brought about by anterior moves, so difficult to be remembered by the blindfold player, excited the imagination of the spectators to such a degree, that they deemed a happy termination of the game next to impossible. Let the reader, knowing the wonderful complication of the game, add to this the confused hum of voices from all parts of the saloon, the stifled murmurs of the by-standers making remarks and expressing their astonishment, the opening and shutting of doors, the dull tramp of feet, the reiterated noise of coughing, (it was in the depth of winter), the loud and joyful exclamations of parties newly entering in ignorance of what was going forward,—in a word, all the innumerable trifling incidents, any one of which is usually sufficient to distract attention, and imagination becomes almost inadequate to conceive an idea of the mental prodigy. Psychological analysis of such a labour is impossible: the mind turns from it bewildered. The fact can only be stated, without explanation or comment.

The Chess-player who devotes himself enthusiastically and *con amore* to his art, leads a life full of emotion and charm: he becomes a general, and fights five or six

* This classical sobriquet was given by Louis XV. to André Danican, a native of Dreux, who was a member of the Paris Chess Club for thirty years; but, being a royalist, emigrated at the period of the French revolution, and died in London, on the 31st of August, 1795, at the age of sixty-nine.—Ed.

battles a day without shedding a drop of blood; he enjoys all the self-gratulation of victory, supports defeat with philosophy, revels in the luxury of retaliation and vengeance, without sacrificing a single life: he adopts the language of the heroic profession; he says, "Yesterday I fought General Haxo," and smiles with reawakened honour; or, "General Duchaffaut obtained a victory over me this morning," and modestly casts his eyes on the ground. We frequently hear such phrases as the following at the chess-board:—"Yours was an exceedingly awkward position;"—"Your attack on the right was feeble;"—"How unskilfully you engaged your knights;"—"The General manœuvred admirably to save his castle." It requires no great stretch of imagination to fancy one's self in a camp on the eve of a battle. And the best of this innocent passion is, that it never disgusts by satiety; the intoxicating illusions of to-day recommence to-morrow: to the Chess-player, all is vanity apart from the chess-board. No disenchanted Cincinnatus rushes back to his plough-tail after these battles; no philosophical Charles V. turns his pensive steps towards the hermitage of St. Just; disgusted with glory and mankind, the conqueror does not depart from the battle-field; the conquered recalls his slain to life, and fights the battle o'er again; the bystanders cheer the loser, and congratulate the winner in turn. Six times a-day the Chess-player passes beneath triumphal arches, or bows to a conqueror, and the clock in the apartment striking the hour, always finds him at his post; to-day making a stand against the English; to-morrow against the Russian, and the day after against the Holy Alliance, or waging civil war against his own country, in actual contest with a relative or a dear friend. Glory, emotion, interest, sorrow, joy, every day, and at all seasons: even old age does not wrest him from the gentle fatigues of such campaigns. There are no pensioners, no Chelsea, no Greenwich, for the heroes of the chess-board. Behold, at the Club Ménars, the noble and fresh-looking old Chevalier de Barneville, the contemporary of Philidor, and of Jean Jacques Rousseau; he has played in his time with Emile and St. Preux, at the Café Procope; he has received a pawn from the great Philidor. In the reign of Louis XV., he commenced his game by the classical shepherd move with an encyclopædist of the Faubourg St. Germain, at two o'clock in the afternoon; he now opens his game at precisely the same hour by Captain Evans's gambit with M. de Jouy, De Lacretelle, or Jay for his antagonist: that calm and venerable countenance still preserves the same expression of joy after a victory, the same happy smile that animated it in the presence of Jean Jacques and D'Alembert. What a magnificent and irrefutable living argument in favour of chess! what a powerful stimulant, unknown to the Faculty! The beautiful serenity of mind called into operation at the same hour, and applied to the same object, admirably regulates all the functions of the body, and confers on the physical organs an easy routine of existence that nothing can interrupt. The Chess-player has no time to be ill, nor to die, to-day, because he must play the other game to-morrow.

When kings had nothing else to do but to reign, the chess-board was in high estimation at court; people now-a-days, in affecting a few of the powers of royalty, have included the game of chess in their conquests over thrones. Hence the noble game has made immense progress; and, from being purely aristocratic, has become

universal. In England, particularly, where volumes on volumes are published, and, if scarcely ever read there, are translated and studied on the continent, hundreds of works on chess have been produced, to which the art is considerably indebted for its advancement. Formerly, Lolli and the Calabrian were the authorities on the game; these authors who, unfortunately, flourished too soon, like all writers who have not the good fortune to be born our contemporaries, have almost fallen into oblivion, though their works still tacitly preserve an honourable place in the library, when in good condition. Since those venerable professors' time, immense numbers of openings of games have been invented, some of which have entirely altered the classical economy of the ancient game: every piece has its *gambit*, which is called by its name, so that Palamede, Tamerlane, Alexander the Great, Parmenio, Sesostris, Confucius, Mahomet, Selim II., Lusignan, Charlemagne, Renaud de Montauban, Lancelot, Francis I., Charles V., all the great men who claimed such high pretensions to the science of the chess-board, would die again of surprise, if they were resuscitated to witness Captain Evans's gambit. It is, in truth, somewhat singular that Palamede, who played ten consecutive years before the walls of Troy, with Agamemnon, Achilles, Diomede, the two Ajaxes, all in the flower of youth, and full of imagination and spirits, never hit upon the most insignificant gambit. It was Paris, a shepherd on Mount Ida, who originated the shepherd's move, and Sinon, who gave the check of the wooden horse to king Priam, did not invent even the knight's gambit. Yet what opportunities had not these heroes to advance the divine game! Achilles confined himself to his tent, and played night and day at chess with Patroclus; Agamemnon fought little, and played with Nestor. With careworn brow, and bowed down by the weight of his conjugal wrongs, Menelaus played with Ulysses. On board the thousand vessels at anchor at the mouth of the Simoïs, were two thousand Greek captains, who all cultivated the science of the chess-board. They fought once a quarter, and, on the morrow of the battle, the games recommenced on the lofty poops of the thousand vessels, *celsis puppibus*, or on the beach. It was a vast Chess Club, having for its limits the Scamander, the Scæan gates, Cape Sigeum, and Tenedos. It is easy to conceive that the kings and chiefs, who were dying of *ennui* at the siege of Ilium, had recourse to a game invented, or at least perfected, by their companion Palamede; and that, overcome by the inexhaustible charm and the endless variety of its combinations, they passed the heat of the day beneath the ample shade of some of the pines of Ida, under their tents or between decks, before a chess-board. The length of the siege, which puzzled Voltaire and the Venetian Poco Curante, is thus easily accounted for. In the hypothesis here hazarded, a plausible reason is found for the protracted retreat of Achilles in his tent during eight years, which, but for the powerful assistance of chess, would be utterly unaccountable in a young hero strongly inclined to the stirring excitement of war. Suppress the Homeric tradition of chess, and how shall we explain the conduct of Thetis' son, a recluse in a canvass tent six feet square? This reasoning, we repeat, applies to the hitherto enigmatical slowness of the siege. All the besieging kings, passionately fond of chess, forgot Ilium and the wrongs of the injured Menelaus, insomuch that the bereaved husband of Helen, in order to turn the lukewarm kings from the fascinations of check-mate, was

obliged to represent to them, in glowing terms, the injury that necessarily resulted to him from the prolonged siege, and the increasing years of the wife ravished from his bosom : and when, at the end of the memorable ten years, Menelaus beheld both Troy and his wife in ruins, the noble game had been the cause of the mischief. The chess-board was the true lance of Achilles. At the instigation of Menelaus, Epeus, the constructor (*fabricator Epeus*), cut out a piece as large as a mountain (*instar montis*) ; Sinon continued to move it by oblique passes, like a rocking-horse, and mated king Priam, (*mactat ad aras*, according to the Virgilian expression). It is unfortunate that the Iliad and Æneid have not fifty verses consecrated to this tardy explanation, which, we trust, will satisfy savants and commentators.

The Caliphs and Sultans of the East have, from time immemorial, been in the constant habit of leading an indolent life, divided between the seraglio and the chess-board. History records a large number of sultanas and obscure odalisques, who played as well as Jean Jacques, who, by the way, whatever he might have thought, was not a very proficient player. In the unhappy days when England and Russia allowed the monarchs of Asia to live in peace and quietness, ere the Eastern Question saw the light, those brilliant foreigners, friends of the shade, and sons of the Sun, profoundly meditated on the science of chess, and waged a peaceable warfare with their neighbours, the object of strife being a beautiful slave, or a magnificent elephant. We find the following lines in an unknown poem :—

> "Le grand roi Kosroes perdit sur une case
> La rose d'Ispahan, la perle du Caucase ;
> La belle Dilara, sérénité du cœur,
> Qu'un MAT livra soumise au pouvoir du vainqueur."

Our roués of the Regency, who staked their mistresses at lansquenet, were only the revivers of the ancient customs of the East. It is related that one of Mahomet's grandsons, the venerable Orchan, chief of the Ottoman race, was, in 1359, within an ace of losing at chess his favourite Zalouë (sunbeam), in a game with his vizier. Just as the sacred hand of the descendant of Mahomet was about to make a fatal move, and lay himself open to a decisive check-mate, Zalouë, who was watching the game from behind a curtain, uttered a loud scream, which had the effect of arresting the ill-advised hand ; Orchan, adds the tradition, avoided the move, and kept his favourite. History relates several anecdotes of the chess-board in which ladies figure. From the East to Venice is but a step. Flamine Barberigo, a rich Venetian senator, played with Erminia, his adored and lovely ward, his furious jealousy allowing her no other amusement. The Barberigo palace was Erminia's prison. About this time, Boy, the Syracusan, who was travelling the world in search of adventures, went to Venice. His renown there, as elsewhere, was great; and immediately on his arrival, he was summoned to the Grimani, Manfrini, and Pisani-Moreta palaces, where the noble lords of the Republic had so frequently conversed about the great master of Don Juan of Austria and Charles V., the illustrious Boy, to whom pope Paul III. had offered a cardinal's hat, after sustaining at his hand a glorious defeat at chess in open Vatican. The senator Barberigo, the most ancient amateur in Venice, immediately threw open his palace to the Labourdonnais of

Syracuse. Boy refused no invitation, and he was particularly enchanted with his reception by Barberigo, on account of the lovely Erminia, his captive ward, a young lady of brilliant talents, whose education embraced only a knowledge of the game of chess, and who sighed in secret for a brighter future. She improved under Boy's excellent tutelage, and finally disappeared with the Syracusan, just as he had made her perfect in the science. The house of Barberigo never recovered from this check.

A few words on the moral of the game. It is to be wished that the science of chess were cultivated in schools and colleges, where we are taught so many ridiculous and tormenting things as children, which are of no use to us when we become men. A wonderful mass of practical philosophy lies concealed in the game of chess. Human life is a perpetual struggle between will and fate; and the globe is a chess-board on which we move in turn every piece, sometimes at random, in fruitless strife with inexorable fortune, which checks us at every game. Hence so much mis-play, so many wretchedly ill-assorted alliances, so many impolitic moves! He who has early trained his mind to the material calculations of the chess-board, has unconsciously acquired habits of prudent forethought, which will avail him beyond the limited horizon of black and white squares. Compelled to guard constantly against innocuous snares, spread by the little ivory citizens, the Chess-player acquires experience in an imaginary world. His life become a long game of chess, fools* abounding in all directions, contemplating moves against his safety. Every man who accosts him is either a rook or a pawn, and, before making a move, he pauses, and considerately weighs his own policy and that of his antagonist. Let it not be imagined that this continued tension of the mental faculties degenerates into mania, and absorbs the mind to such a degree as to disturb its tranquillity. Chess-players are very amiable and pleasant people: M. de Labourdonnais, who is a most agreeable companion, plays his game in the midst of joyous sallies and sprightly witticisms, which never cause him to overlook an opportunity to checkmate his antagonist, nor to make an impolitic move. Thus, a man may by habit create for himself a second nature of perpetual variety. The Chess-player does not even feel this mechanism of mind, which is unceasingly at work within; once in motion by a first impulse, the springs, *nolens volens*, obey him unknown to himself. How many Chess-players have extricated themselves from a dangerous position in the world by skilful calculation, unconscious that their judicious conduct resulted from the cultivation of the noble science. May our observations augment the already numerous body of patrons of the Chess-board; at least, there would be less *ennui* in society, and fewer faults of conduct in the world.

* The third piece, which we call a bishop, is in France called a fool (*fou*).



THE GREAT LADY OF 1830.



THE GREAT LADY OF 1830.

BY MADAME STEPHANIE DE LONGUEVILLE.

Voyez-vous cette madame la marquise qui fait tant la glorieuse ? c'est la fille de M. Jourdain. MOLIERE.



ATISFY by all means your natural curiosity," said the Count de Surville to the young Duke d'Olburn, who had just arrived in Paris; "it is indispensable for a foreigner: I will be your cicerone, and guide you through the Babel we now-a-days distinguish as the circle of the Exclusives, and with which you desire to become thoroughly acquainted. I will present you at once to the Great Lady,—to Madame de Marne; her husband has been minister ever since —yesterday; and she receives company to-night, for the last time at her private residence. It is not yet ten o'clock,—rather early for setting off, but we shall arrive before the crowd, and therefore be able to observe the better."

The carriage bearing the Duke and the Count rolled off to the quarter of the Nouvelle Athènes. A pell-mell of private carriages, and carriages hired for the season,—a medley of cabriolets and hackney-coaches, soon appeared in regular rank and file; a couple of municipal guards, armed cap-a-pèe, protected the approaches to Madame de Marne's hotel, the exterior of which was illumined by four lamps; the vestibule, dressed out for the fête, was lined with green trees, like the entrance to a coffee-house, or a family ground in the cemetery of Père la Chaise. The narrow and compressed staircase was brilliantly lighted, it is true, but by the poisonous agency of gas; and at each tiny folding-door of the confined anteroom

stood a servant in fancy livery—invented yesterday, and fabricated by the "midnight lamp" of the by-gone night;—coffee-colour was its hue; it was trimmed with silver and lead buttons, which displayed the letters D. M.

To reach the Queen of the Fête, the Count and his companion had to cross two or three rooms, into which company had already begun to pour. Madame de Marne was seated at the upper end of the further chamber, in a gilded arm-chair; and, like a queen amid her court, in the centre of a circle of ladies, covered with gauze and flowers, and glittering with diamonds: she had assumed an attitude rather constrained than dignified, and uttered her words deliberately and with due consideration, as preparatory to that diplomatic caution and reserve in keeping with the Office for Foreign Affairs, into which she was to make her entrance on the morrow. Permitting no glances to escape her but such as spoke protection or disdain, Madame de Marne was performing dignity to the best of her skill and power, and was arranged in mind and person for the position she was about to occupy before the gaze of the world. Of slight proportions, yet perfectly well-formed, fair, with a bright complexion, and pretty in spite of the irregularity of her features, she would have been a very attractive woman, but for the absurdity and affectation of her pretensions to magnificence. At sight of the Count, her face shone with a marvellous expression of proud satisfaction, and her voice assumed a new and softer cadence, as she said to him, with one of her sweetest smiles, "Every one introduced by you, Count, must be always most welcome to me;" then, bending somewhat from the perpendicular she had been maintaining, she added, "My Lord Duke will, I hope, do me the honour of attending at the Palace of the Ministry, where I shall now receive company every Wednesday." The Duke had scarcely time to acknowledge this gracious invitation, when a crowd of fresh arrivals drew near to make their bows before Madame de Marne. At the sound of their plebeian names she had resumed her formality, had dismissed from her voice all sweetness of tone, and looked at the Duke in a manner which distinctly said, "Forgive this! it is an obligation imposed on power! the epidemic of equality has confounded all ranks, and we must receive every one!"

"To what family does Madame de Marne belong?" inquired the Duke of the Count, on retiring with him to the corner of the room.

"Faith, that is a question not readily answered; the 'Great Ladies' of the present day spring from here, there, and every where; they grow on every hedge: this one is, I believe, the daughter of a blacksmith of Berri, who has become a great speculator, as all enriched plebeians please to call themselves now-a-days."

"See what it is to be a foreigner," said the blushing pride of the German Duke; "I was completely mistaken in the meaning of the phrase 'Great Lady,' and thought high birth indispensable to being one."

"That is to say, you have taken the term in its old and true signification,—but let us move off—we shall be suffocated here; it is a *rout* in all its splendour,—five hundred people in a space that would not hold half the number unless packed in layers, like herrings in a barrel. Ah, Duke, bid your German fastidiousness go to sleep," said the Count, laughing at the look of disgust on his companion's face. "Come, here is the door of the boudoir—open it, we shall be alone there, and I can explain to you what the word 'Great Lady' means in our age—for we can no

longer approach Madame de Marne, and there is no means of observing any thing in a crush and medley like this. Understand, then, that the true 'Great Lady,' she of the olden time, can no longer exist in France,—or in our era, which they are pleased to call the Age of Fashion, but which were more appropriately named that of confusion; deplorable or ridiculous, as the case may be, but always confusion. Whirled off by the terrible hurricane of '93, brayed as in a mortar beneath the ruins of the old monarchy, the Great Lady of the former time has gone to linger away her existence on the soil of emigration, transmitting to her daughters only a few mangled wrecks of the magnificent heritage she received from her sires: the other portions of this heritage, scattered, divided, subdivided, are become the spoils of Fortune, who alone now dispenses them to her favourites of the hour, and this with a sparing hand, and in forms altogether mutilated or extravagant. She who bedecks herself with the title of Great Lady now-a-days is but a caricature, or the antithesis of the Great Lady of the past—a majestic structure, of which all the parts were perfectly in unison, and of which every one bore the ineffable stamp of greatness. Examine the portraits of these Great Ladies of former times,—in what perfect harmony are the features, the air of the head, the general attitude of the whole form, and how all concur, as in the immortal statues of the Greek divinities, to indicate that superiority which is inborn! It is a union of grandeur with all the Graces, but a grandeur which, like the strength of the Farnese Hercules, feels conscious that it needs push no one aside, to make its own value known and appreciated—an assemblage of the noblest elements of nature, first carefully selected, then polished and repolished by time—a brilliant transfiguration of a mass of glory accumulated through ages, inscribed by a hundred generations on all the pages of our history. The Great Lady of former times boasted the blood of all those high barons of France, whose proud banners had been displayed in many battles by the side of, and well-nigh on a level with, the Oriflamme itself. At her birth she had taken her position as the last of a race of worthies, on a genealogical tree nobly emblazoned, and wrote herself a Créqui, or a Montmorency. Apart from all the aids of that pomp of luxury which was her birthright—under the habit of a peasant, as in the richest court costume,—in all, and through all, shone forth the Great Lady in whom there breathed the pride of blood, the rich beauty of a noble race! But take from her ape of modern times the magic of her wealth—despoil her of her Cashmeres and her diamonds, and there will remain of her greatness—*nothing!*"

The Count was an old man of a biting spirit; his tongue was a scourge, and a severe one; he had entered on the favourite chapter of his early reminiscences, and the Duke listened without interrupting him.

"The Great Lady of the present day has no distinctive features, no exclusive forms, no type peculiar to herself; she is sometimes pretty, rarely beautiful, but generally rich; for, in this metallic age of ours, her dowry is for the most part the pedestal of her greatness. Before the world, she is a stiff and affected actress who overplays her part; but behind the scenes she would be frequently a graceful and charming woman, if pride and the intoxication of her prosperity did not too often poison her natural qualities. Produced by a lucky hit on 'Change, a remodelling of the ministry, a dissolution of the Chamber, or a creation of Peers, without a past, without a future, the Great Lady of our epoch is but a passing

meteor, darting wildly across the horizon of a transitory revolution,—an improvisation, more or less felicitous, of that blind deity Fortune,—the last produce of political intrigue. A little town-bred dame, mounted on the high stilts of her pride, believes that she rules all things from that tottering elevation, and imagines herself to be really what she attempts to be, when she has somewhat altered her name, by slipping into it, if it be not *too* hopelessly vulgar, the aristocratic 'De,' or by adding to it that of her birth-place: nay, she even suppresses it altogether, forgetting to ask leave from the Keeper of the Seals, to take simply that of the village near her country-house. One must have seen the Great Lady of former times to comprehend in all its force the absurdity of her who now affects to bear the name. All that you see here in its gala-dress, in its pomp,—these paltry chambers, of which the ceiling threatens to brush your head, and in which three hundred people are suffocating—all these men dressed as for a funeral,—those half-dozen servants in the ante-room, these hired coaches at the gate—can all this have the slightest relation to the princely cortège that surrounded the Great Lady of by-gone times—the numberless domestics,—the splendid liveries,—the blazoned carriages,—the titled, jewelled, and perfumed crowd,—those palaces so vast, so resplendent with hereditary riches,—those immense saloons in which the gilded and silky waves of the splendid court-dresses had space to develop themselves majestically! The proportions of the robes, like those of the palaces and the fortunes, have completely changed. Splendour and greatness have disappeared from our costumes; the form and manner of the Great Lady in the olden times belonged only to herself—suited her alone: the material had been woven for none besides. The dress of our present Great Lady differs in no manner from that of other women:—it is suited to all shapes; individual taste and gracefulness can alone give it an air of distinction.

"To be just, however, we must admit, that the Great Lady of the present day has a more cultivated mind than had her prototype of by-gone ages, whose education confined her intellect, for the most part, to the frivolous though spirited gossiping of the 'Grands Appartements de Versailles.' *Our* Lady, indeed, sometimes aims at science—but then, becoming what the English call a 'Blue-stocking,' and not choosing to seem unacquainted with any of its distinctions, however elevated, however varied, she thinks proper to descant upon all. She prates of physics and politics, of geology and of chemistry, of medicine and of astronomy, with the authority of a Franklin or a Montesquieu, a Cuvier or a Lavoisier, a Broussais or an Arago, and this in such a sort as might half induce a belief in the reality of her erudition, were it not that one finds in the reviews and journals she has read in the morning, all the scientific trappings with which she bedizens herself at night. The Great Lady of the old monarchy saw the fine arts labour for the embellishment of her gilded life, without being able to appreciate their products, except through that instinctive perception by which all are made aware of the presence of the beautiful. The Lady of the present day adds to the perception, the comprehension: she admires with discernment, nay, she sometimes devotes a portion of her time in good earnest to painting, to music, to poetry, and might often claim the title of Artist, in its least restrictive sense.

"In the Lady of our day, the pride of wealth takes the place of that pride in her illustrious origin which was the unalienable portion of the Lady of past times. 'Is

he of noble race?—under what circumstances did his ancestors distinguish themselves?'—were the first questions to him who solicited the honour of presenting to her a stranger.

"'Is he rich?' demands the Lady of the present day, under similar circumstances. Gold is the supreme idol of the hour—gold is the passport for all, and to all—gold is the dispenser of merit. The Great Lady of our day owes to this her most polite attentions—her most gracious smiles. It is frequently by the medium of this alone that she finds herself in the first rank. Thus it is perfectly just in her to proportion the consideration she accords to the fortune of those who surround her. It is true that you might perceive, on your entrance, how high a degree of satisfaction her vanity receives, when historical names come to ornament her drawing-rooms; but be certain that in general her most profound sympathies will always be the achievement of the *millionaire*. In her conversation, you will frequently hear the arithmetical figures resounding: it is the force of blood! 'He has so many thousands a year—so much landed, so much funded property—manufactures to such an extent—he is a man of unlimited credit—he has an excellent house: you will find there everything best worth looking at in Paris.' Is her admiration drawn to handsome furniture, rich jewels, or an elegant equipage?—she fails not to enumerate, among the reasons for her approval, the high price of the object admired. The Great Lady of former times never thought of the numerical value of things; she did not know how to reckon; money was altogether unknown to her; she never soiled her hands with its contact; it was the business of her stewards to estimate and pay for all those inventions to which luxury gave existence for her alone. If a certain inconvenience was attached to this careless ignorance of the 'circulating medium,' it was redeemed by incontestable advantages. Her liberality enriched all who approached her; and gave to all her actions, even to her wildest squanderings, a character of greatness to which we have now nothing analogous.

"Mean in everything, the Great Lady of the present time, if prodigal, knows how to exhaust her purse only by the ceaseless renewal of those myriad nothings which Fashion is daily creating for her votaries. If, on the contrary, a spirit of order distinguish her, you will perceive it, in the arrangement of her household, only by that parsimony inherent with the city traditions of her family. Pride, vanity, and meanness—these make up the Great Lady of the present day—these make up the epoch. It would seem that each epoch has its Great Lady, in whom it is epitomized between our own and that of the old monarchy. France has seen two, but on these I will but briefly touch. The one—that of the Directory and Consulate—reminded one of Aspasia and Phryne. She had their graces and beauty,—their wit and manners; she put an end to the Reign of Terror, tore France from the revolutionary saturnalia, and substituted those brilliant and voluptuous fêtes of which the Raincy was one of the theatres, and to which resorted the Brutus of the eve, to prepare himself for that metamorphosis that was to make him on the morrow the courtier of a despot. The other—that into which her forerunner, the Aspasia, naturally transformed herself—was the Great Lady of the Empire; and she died with the setting of that sun of which she was but a ray. This last showed herself to be an assemblage of contrarieties, but the daughter of victory. She displayed, up to a certain point, the mother's fascinating proportions; and if at times the manners of

the guard-house crept out in her deportment, at least her title, and the ermine of her mantle, were the well-earned rewards of a thousand brilliant actions performed in every battle-field, over which the eagle had waved its triumphant wing.

" The Great Lady of the present day is very skilful in arranging the intonations of her voice, as you may have remarked in Madame de Marne. She swells or diminishes its volume according to the quality of the person to whom she addresses herself; but, thanks to the pretensions of her pride, it is never regulated by propriety. Her tone is always false, so that she produces the effect of an instrument out of tune; she is never natural, and overwhelms one with the weight of her studied politeness, so unlike to the perfect good taste, the simple and true courtesy, which distinguished the Great Lady of by-gone days. She rarely knows how to be *familiar*, without degenerating into rudeness; arrogant and disdainful towards her inferiors, she presses on them, almost invariably, with the whole weight of her consequence; her susceptibilities are excessive; a nothing frightens her; and, like a sentinel before a town newly conquered, she is ever ready to take alarm at the notion that one desires to contest her position, or proposes to deny her superiority; she prepares herself to maintain the one, and support the other, by a double portion of formality in her manners, and haughtiness in her tone.

" With the Great Lady of former times, have disappeared those immense domains, those imposing castles, whose high and antique towers had the power to protect the hamlets scattered around them. With them are extinct all those seignorial rights, the conquest of their ancestors, the price of their blood, the brightest gems in their coronets.

" In her little villa, built yesterday, wherein all is squeezed into accordance with her little greatness, the Great Lady of the present day labours vainly to resuscitate the noble *castellane* of past ages: she plumes herself with high pretension; her narrow and plebeian hospitality is a sort of foil—of contrast to the princely welcome that awaited all who entered the dwelling of the true Great Lady.

" On her birthday, she sometimes condescends to give the inhabitants of the neighbouring village a dance before the gates of her park; and, in the excess of her munificence, she adds to this favour that of distributing a few *barrels* of wretched wine, well watered beforehand.

" Where the Great Lady of the past ages gave alms silently, and with abundance, that of the present day deals out ostentatiously her stinted dole, and thus lessens the misery of the indigent but for an hour. But, on the other hand—and one owes her the justice of proclaiming it—if, in her charities, she is too economical of her purse, at least it must be acknowledged that she is prodigal of herself. Indefatigable in dancing for some, in singing for others, she beams forth lady patroness of all the fêtes, balls, and concerts, organized for the benefit of the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the refugee, whom the generous sympathies of the public pity feel it necessary to relieve; nay, pushing her charity farther still,—and here we have the sublime of devotion,—during certain periodical paroxysms in favour of indigence, and by way of helping it all the better, the Great Lady imposes on herself the whole duty of shopkeeping. In its name, and in extempore bazaars, does she make herself a trinketer!—yes, a trinketer; and, with a courage altogether her own, she pursues all her acquaintances, whether rich or not; compels them to pay,

for the worthless trifles spread out before her, their weight in gold; forces upon them that sort of tax for the poor which she tells them compassionate souls should impose on themselves, and to which she contributes personally only by certain screens, pin-cushions, and pen-wipers, the work of her hands, and of which Harpagon himself, had she been his daughter, would have permitted her to incur the expense with all his heart. Nevertheless, and probably because she places herself before the semblance of a counter, in a well-warmed and comfortable room, this Great Lady persuades herself she is giving to the world an edifying example of unparalleled benevolence. Who, indeed, shall affirm—for the field of pride is illimitable as the plains of ether—if, at such moments, she does not go the length of imagining that she displays on her brow the halo of divine charity with which that of St. Vincent de Paul was resplendent, when, having given his last cloak, his last farthing, to the poor, he voluntarily, and to relieve the captive from his chain, condemned himself to the coarse and humiliating labour of the galleys?

"Faith has no longer its heavenly influence. The Voltairian scepticism has destroyed it; for, like the simoon — that pestilential wind of the desert, whose fatal breath dries up, withers, and annihilates whatever meets it—this audacious school has respected nothing,—has destroyed all. Under the pretence of desiring only to destroy ignorance, superstition, fanaticism, and hypocrisy, it has extinguished in our souls that religion which is the pure and only source of the most sublime inspirations; and has replaced it only by torturing doubts, or by a cold materialism which taints humanity.

"The Great Lady, however, induced by caprice, fashion, or to give herself the air of a person well-born, affects to observe certain ordinances of the church. She has her prayer-book clasped with gold, and her seat reserved; on state occasions, she carries the plate at charity sermons; and is godmother to church-bells. In the magnificence of her devout ardour, she gives a plaster Virgin, an altar curtain of embroidered net, or a pinchbeck cross, to the church of the village near her country-house, with a dinner now and then to the curate.

"The Great Lady always perfumes herself, as much as possible, with aristocratic opinions. No one fulminates anathemas more loudly than this ungrateful one against the revolutions that have made her what she is. If you comprehended Madame de Marne when those plebeian names whose wealth did not gild their obscurity came sounding in her ears, you would feel how much the Great Lady was suffering at the confusion of ranks,—how she was grieving at the necessity in which Power finds itself, now-a-days, of making its saloons a sort of *olla podrida*.

"The Great Lady of our times is not restricted, more than other women, as to her leisure. There is no charge at court for her,—no 'tabouret,'—no card-table of the Queen; but, on the other hand, the citizen royalty gives her certain balls, which it takes care to embellish with all the attractions of a family meeting, especially inviting the six thousand 'Eminences' of the Commercial Directory.

"Love, gallantry, all is dead in France. Its women have no longer the privilege of occupying the place next after business in the thoughts of men: they are now only a kind of interlude to their pleasures,—a sort of breathing-time between horse-races in the Bois de Boulogne, and orgies at the Café de Paris. Surrounded by fewer seductions than the Great Lady of the past, is the one who has taken her name

more faithful to her conjugal duties? I doubt it greatly; but the age has no charge to urge against her. She observes its precepts, she preserves appearances, she is virtuous,—after its fashion. After all, a mystery in her attachments, is, to the Great Lady of the present day, a necessity of her position,—a condition of her being, or not being. A plant brought but as yesterday to the soil on which she decorates herself with fading flowers, she feels that she would have no power to resist the breath of scandal, had she the imprudence to lay herself open to it: she knows that the slightest breath would overwhelm and cast her back into her original nothingness."

As the Count was uttering these last words, a tall young man, with a pale oval face, and a chin buried in the beard of the middle ages, seemed to glide secretly into the boudoir; but withdrew in haste, on seeing the Count and his companion.

"I no longer doubt," said the former, with a malicious smile. "Yes, the Great Lady has her hours of reception with closed doors. The orchestra is playing its last notes. The crowd is much thinner. Let us hasten to approach Madame de Marne, if you wish for another insight into the character of the Great Lady."

"Who is that man balancing himself in the middle of the floor, like a swan in its basin of marble, and to whom the surrounding group is listening so attentively?"

"*He* is the son of a retired schoolmaster. Previous to 1830, he was a petty journalist," replied the Count de Surville to the Duke d'Olburn. "He is now the representative and defender of the interests of France in all the Courts of Europe—in all the countries of the world. He is the husband of the 'Great Lady,' Monsieur de Marne, the minister of yesterday."





THE HOSPITAL ATTENDANT.



THE HOSPITAL ATTENDANT.

BY P. BERNARD.

Ubi non est mulier, ingemiscit æger.

C'est cœur de la femme qui approche de plus près le mortel aux prises avec la douleur; c'est sa main qui le touche avec plus de douceur.—PERCY ET LAURENT.



ENTURE to look into that long narrow room, bordered by iron bedsteads, with scanty but clean white curtains, and watch that little man who glides rather than walks, in an old pair of slippers, along the polished floor. He appears, then disappears; he is here one moment, and gone the next. Observe, however, that he is perambulating from one bedside to another, to inquire if there is anything new, and to wish good morrow. Do you know to *whom?* To——mere numbers; for the man of whom we are speaking has no fellow-beings in the place where we find him: there, the world is composed only of himself, and Numbers One, Two, Three, Four, &c.

Where are we, then? We are at a gathering-point, where are congregated infirm artizans, honest tradesmen, too-confiding capitalists, the faithful adherents of a fallen dynasty, victims of disinterested friendship, men of unshaken virtue, and too diffident talents; we are where professed philanthropists never need a refuge;—we are in an hospital.

Now let us speak of the man we have just been observing. Is it from taste, from necessity, or from a self-imposed penance, that his life is consecrated to disease and infection? De we behold in him some generous disciple of the good Mère Agnès, or of Gerard de Provence; some knight-hospitalier of St. John, of the Sepulchre, of Mount Carmel, or of St. Lazarus? No; for he is not equipped at once to combat and to suecour—to tend the sick in the hospital, and to protect the wounded on the battle-field. However military manners and customs may now-a-days be softened, the demeanour and the occupation of this personage in no degree assimilate to the heroic; and, alas! in these degenerate days, knights-errant have disappeared from the earth.

Or is he rather one of the fraternity of St. Jean de Dieu, originally from Italy, whom Catherine de Medicis attempted to naturalize in France? We cannot think so, when we hear him *swear* at yonder poor patient who has concentrated all his remaining strength in an effort to call him somewhat too impatiently.

Examine him a little more closely. Where could one find a more important air beneath a yellowish cotton night-cap, unless perchance in the refreshment-room of a cheap restaurant? On his arm he wears a napkin that was once white, and never hero bore his honours with more dignity and assurance; an apron with rounded corners is tied round his waist, under his woollen jacket; one or two other appendages to his costume need not be described, as (apothecaries having long since disappeared) that man can be no other than the Hospital Attendant.

The Attendant's name is invariably Jean: it is so easily pronounced! Patients at the point of dissolution may contrive to utter Jean!—Four letters, as in the interjections, Hola! Oheh! and without the difficult letter *h*. Of all names, Jean is the one that a humane government ought to impose by edict on all children intended for porters, valets, or any department of servitude. Let us except grooms, their masters always having the resource to call them Tom.

Jean's situation is forced upon him either by poverty, ignorance, or by greediness. Start not at this last word, so little in accordance with general notions of hospital rules. Passions are indulged where they can, and how they can; and the terms hospital and spare diet are not necessarily synonymes. Ask the Attendant, if the quantity, or half, or a quarter of the quantity of fresh eggs, &c., ordered morning and evening in the prescription-book, are not substantial realities, which, to save the patients from over-diet, he suffers to weigh sometimes very heavily on his own stomach. Nor are rhubarb and castor-oil the only remedies administered in an hospital: cordials are not absolutely chimerical, nor is brandy completely imaginary; and the Attendant's propensities on this subject are so well known, that it is not unfrequently found expedient to alter the colour and taste of the brandy intended for the patients' use, in order to save him from the temptation. "Calumny!" cry the honourables of the profession; and calumny it may be, but there is undoubtedly some truth at the bottom of it; and, after all, as certain great criminals have said, "No man is perfect."

Admitted originally into the hospital as a patient, the Attendant sometimes owes his situation to a difficult operation successfully performed upon him. He is re-

tained as a specimen of skilful dissection experimented on a living subject, of whom, for the interest and honour of science, the surgeons are unwilling to lose sight; and accordingly they offer him the appointment of Attendant, to keep him at the hospital, from the same motive that calves with two heads are put into glass-cases, and tænia preserved in spirits of wine. Alas! it is this same spirit that destroys the Attendant. All things have changed places; and, in this case, Jean is the vessel.

Jean is a willing and unceasing gossip. Leaning upon his broom—one of the classical attributes of his profession—he will relate to you, whether you are willing to hear him or not, all he knows, which is a great deal, for he knows everything. He has taken his ideas of the Monarchy from an ex-servitor of his Majesty Louis XVI., who died in No. 93; of the Republic, from the reminiscences of the porter of a Girondin; and the traditions of the Empire have been transmitted to him by the many veteran soldiers who have at different times started for a real place of rest from the hospital, or perhaps through the feuilletons of the *Siècle*. What he knows about poetry, he learnt from insane young men, who, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, died reciting, to their incurably deaf neighbours, verses which their friends could never read, and the public never appreciate. His notions on literature have been drawn from ruined publishers; on medicine, from all the doctors who have successively appeared, or been excluded, since his entrance into the hospital; and on philosophy, from countless pauper-patients.

Every good quality is attended by its own peculiar disadvantage. Jean, being a great talker, cannot fail to be a politician; nay, he may pronounce himself the best-informed man in all France of what was published in *yesterday's* papers. Jean reads on the sly all the newspapers of the preceding day; and we appeal to the reader to recal to his remembrance his school-days, and then to say whether or not his secret studies did not profit him more than all the rest. Jean thus peruses gratis the *Journal des Débats* of the Directors, the *Temps* of the Doctor, the *Quotidienne* of the Superintendant, and the *National* of the In-door Pupil. Jean's faith in all *prints* of the most opposite politics was something sacred, until one fatal day he discovered in them a serious departure from truth, committed by one, and faithfully copied by the rest. The facts were these:—A man having received three stabs from the *dear* hand of his mistress, was borne to the hospital. Jean was present at the dressing of his wounds: they were not mortal, though the operation he was compelled to undergo was, which is quite another thing. The man was operated upon, and died; and the next day it was stated that he had fallen a victim to the blows of his fair assassin. Jean maintains that he died from the effects of the operation; and since that time he rather mistrusts both the good and the bad that are published touching the ministry, and other state matters.

His business is to tighten a bandage, to adjust a plaster, and to put on leeches; but Jean lounges with delight in the wards, as others lounge on the quays and in the sun: he goes from pleurisy to consumption, retailing the news; from fever to rheumatism, from a blister to a broken limb, as the butterfly flutters from the lily to the rose, from the rose to the pink.



Jean's person, not generally gigantic, we have already informed the reader is terminated by a cotton night-cap, which he has the good taste not to stick on one side, but to wear straight, and slouched almost below his eyebrows. Without being a coward, Jean's courage is not unimpregnable, and therefore plays he not the swaggerer amongst the patients. His fashion of wearing his cap savours somewhat of the restaurant; and, in fact, Jean is not a total stranger to the art of restoring life. Occasionally he caters for those patients whom the Doctor has strictly dieted; and of course this favour is always subject to a contribution, which rises in proportion to the scarcity of the regimen prescribed. The *number* who is allowed half the usual portion, and is desirous of two-thirds, is taxed at a reasonable price,—that is to say, he pays as pays a Christian to a Jew, or as the heir of a rich family to the usurer; but the price rises at once, in a most unequal proportion, for the poor patient, who, not being allowed to take anything, wishes for a *quarter* of the general allowance, and by him the bone of a chicken, already touched by dying lips, is paid as if it came straight from the shop. But wisdom rather than avarice presides at these assessments; and it is only just that he who endangers his life should pay rather dearly for his temerity.

But soft! take off your hat.—Here is the hero, the pattern of Attendants, coming forward. Obeyed by his equals, esteemed by his superiors, this is the Attendant *par excellence*,—the Attendant beyond all price. Perhaps you have visited the man who immerses himself in water without getting wet, or him who goes through fire without being burnt,—the impenetrable and incombustible. The man whom I have just presented to you, more wonderful than all this, comes in contact with every disease known, without catching any. Can you guess how he has arrived at this grand result? The means are in everybody's power. Jean has had the hospital fever,—that is to say, the fever that includes all others, the fever of fevers, that which preserves you from every other malady, either by killing you outright, or by rendering you invulnerable. The hospital fever is the Attendants' hardest trial,—their tour of the world: few survive it, but those few never have it again. Hence, such a Jean as this is rare and invaluable. The typhus and the cholera pass by him like a zephyr over the surface of a summer sea; and when at last he dies, it is only because everything human must have an end.

The Sister of Charity and the Attendant are the two great powers of the hospital, dividing their empire as such things are generally divided,—that is, very unequally. The Sister is the Queen, the Attendant only her Lord Chamberlain, whose authority depends upon the degree of favour he enjoys in his sovereign's presence. Thus the pious Attendant is the favourite, next (be it understood) to the hypocritical Attendant.

We have called them great powers, and our expression will be found quite just, when the reader is made acquainted with their arrangements, and the little diplomatic presents that cement the harmony and perfect mutual understanding that subsist between them.

The important negotiations that take place are generally relative to the articles of general consumption, such as eggs, milk, wine, all delicate viands liable to spoil, and requiring careful management. The problem that these two worthies have often to solve in common is this :—Without changing anything of the quality or quantity of the articles prescribed, to give their portion to all those who have the right and some others besides. As to the wine, one might without fanaticism suppose, that some part of the secret of the wedding-feast at Cana has been transmitted to the truly devout; at all events, this idea is not the most unhristian. This is a case for the reader's conscience, and, *honi soit qui mal y pense*, though the problem is solved every day to general satisfaction.

The Sister represents religion; the Attendant, philosophy, and recklessness. What is a wound, in the eyes of an Attendant?—a quarter or half a pound of mangled flesh. The blood spilt is much less precious than wine; and he regards a corpse merely as something that will make room for a new patient, or leave a number vacant, and which is to be covered with a sheet, and taken to the dissecting-room—that is all.

Poets exclaim, with parade and without truth,

"Que j'en ai vu mourir!"

When Jean is in the humour, he contents himself with adding, but without any literary pretension, "And I, then?" In fact, Jean and death are very old acquaintances, and scarcely a day passes that they do not do something one for the other. Jean, either out of stupid complaisance, or from inattention, lets a soul depart which it was still possible to detain an instant longer; death often adding to the Attendant's worldly possessions an old coat, a snuff-box, or a pipe. Touching exchange! Fearful reciprocity!

There are days when the duties of Jean's office assume an imposing and solemn character; when, for instance, he has to conduct and reconduct some poor wounded creature to and from the operating room; some of the patients sit up in bed to see him; others, on foot, wearing their grey caps, crowd round him. Jean travels to and fro from the patient's bed to the room, preparing one and the other, and one for the other. The Attendant supports the pale and trembling sufferer, and as they pass, smilingly demonstrates to him that the operation he is about to undergo is not a painful one; and in his humanity goes so far as to offer to pledge his honour in proof of what he advances. Those of the spectators who have gone the same way, and fortunately returned—*rari nantes*—also throw in their words of encouragement, "Number so-and-so," cries one, "don't be afraid; they cut off my leg very well." "Oh!" cries another, "keep up your spirits; they amputated my arm to admiration." Each one proffers what he has lost to the unhappy wretch who is about to be deprived of a part of himself. Jean is present at the operation, takes note of the

cries and groans, and according to these, classes his patient on his list and ranks him in his esteem. With indignation and astonishment Jean remarks, that women generally support the most terrible operations, without allowing a single word to escape them. "Women, who talk so readily about nothing," adds he. Jean will only see in this, a provoking spirit of contradiction on their part. On this subject Jean shows himself neither just nor gallant.



How often has Jean been the acting lawyer for the will of the lover who, dying, had nothing to bequeath but a ring and a lock of hair to the woman for whom in the delirium of youth, love, and fever, he had dreamed flowers, diamonds, and wealth inexhaustible! What touching and what terrible secrets have been confided to him! Disclosures, perhaps, of an exalted mind condemned in some poor body, in a wretched condition, to expiate here below the profanation of a former existence, which, seeing its deliverance at hand, was bright with hope. . . . and these hopes were reputed the ravings of insanity.

In a hospital, everything is counted a disease, or one of the infirmities to which humanity is subject; secrets are there learnt of the poor and the gifted, who, at their last hour, no longer refuse themselves the luxury of tears, and of revealing their innermost thoughts,—secrets of the beggar, who, having left a few farthings in the straw of his garret, knows too well the value of money not to wish them to profit some one,—secrets of the honest labourer, who bitterly regrets his sickly wife and seven children, left at home without fuel and without bread! What confession of heroic devotedness, unnatural crimes, tears of religious faith, outpourings of long-buried and heart-consuming passion, wailing, and gnashing of teeth!

How much more does the man now engaging our attention know of mankind, than all the philosophers put together; how much more has he seen with his own eyes, than all the poets have ever even imagined! and, oh! sublime of the science, Jean is unaware that he knows anything.

He beholds patients succeed patients, with the same incurable and profound indifference that courtiers look at political revolutions: his duties are the same, whoever they may be, and this is the only idea he has of constancy, and the only meaning conveyed to his mind by the word eternity. When you have become one of the *have-beens*, and are no longer sensible of the obligation, Jean has yet something to do for you: he takes you down to the dead-room; deposits you on the flag-stones, lights a funeral lamp, and fastens to your arm a bell-rope, in case—by no means an impossible one—of your being only in a trance. Jean has no objection to believe you living, but you must just ring the bell; without this precaution you will be handed over, on the morrow, to the attendant of the dissecting-room, who will come, with his pipe in his mouth, to claim his *subject*. The day after your death,

you cease to be a corpse, and become a subject; so are those called who, still useful after death, serve for anatomical investigation.—Subjects!

What a royalty!

But it is a royalty, harassed and tormented more than would at first thought be supposed. Heads, legs, and arms, are sometimes most unruly, and without galvanism having any thing to do with the case, the anatomist does not always find them where they were left. This phenomenon is easily explained, the medical students stealing one another's subjects with no more scruples than are shown by authors in plagiarisms.

To return to our Attendant. He is rarely married, in general not having a sufficiently high idea of the human species to wish to perpetuate it. He however makes no vow of celibacy. He is unwilling to bind himself to any thing, and accordingly sometimes sacrifices himself. When he has a family, this is the way it is distributed.

His mother is at the Hospital for Incurables.

His wife is at the Lying-in Hospital.

His eldest child is at the Enfant Jesus.

And, lastly, he has an uncle, who is the pride and glory of all the family, a porter in a country hospital.

The Attendant is not, as might at first sight be thought, the male of the Nurse: they belong one and the other to a very different race. The nurse has always much pretension; she is a widow who has seen better days; she lived much at her ease in the lifetime of her husband, who was a remarkably handsome man, and quite the gentleman. Her misfortunes have been numerous.

Save the exceptions indicated above, the Attendant commonly is descended, without shame as without vanity, from unknown and nameless parents. The reminiscences of his childhood recal only games of every kind, and clambering over ramparts and parapets to see criminals guillotined; he believes he was born in Burgundy, and he grew up, as grow mushrooms and nettles. Now the Nurse is round and fat, and rolls along rather than walks; the Attendant is thin and withered. Patients must always be inclined to say to him, "Get cured yourself." The Nurse's greediness is always confined to little dainties and sweet things; but the Attendant's voracity, when it pleases him to display the extent of his digestive power, attacks everything. We have already spoken of his gluttony, which is merely a defect of character; but, alas! his extraordinary capability developes this defect in a manner almost superhuman. Attendants have been seen to swallow the portions of a whole ward, and their voracity has been known to go far beyond what one would suppose the limits of the possible. Jean has an appetite worthy of the miasma which surrounds and excites him.

We perceive with regret that hitherto we have spoken very ill of the Attendant; but we must not bear malice: to slander is a disease. We hasten to assert that the Attendant often renders signal services to suffering humanity, and when inclined to be sober, intelligent, and careful, he can do much towards the mitigation and even the cure of certain diseases. Decidedly, I am inclined to retract some part of the ill I have said of my hero.

Talking of heroes, it is but right to mention that the military Attendant differs entirely from the civil. In the first place, the former wears an uniform, and everybody knows the serious modification that this simple circumstance of itself makes in an individual. The elements of his affecting history might perhaps be learnt of the Pensioners at the Invalides, and a melancholy reverse discovered for the medals of Jena, Austerlitz, and Friedland.

The Attendant always knows of what disease he shall die: on that point he is never mistaken; it is the result of his experience, and the crowning-point of all his labour. When he is once certain of his complaint, do not imagine that he seeks to cure it; on the contrary, he affords it every imaginable facility, and ordinarily dies by what he has most lived, his digestion. Dying, he leaves his pipe to the Number he esteems the most, and his body to the dissecting-room. A cemetery appears to him a superfluity, and he regards a tomb as an obstacle to the circulation—a monument as an affectation and weakness not to be thought of—and the cemetery of Père la Chaise as an eligible site for a Vauxhall Garden. Jean merely recommends himself to the pupil whom he thinks the cleverest, and invites several of the others to take a piece,—this one an arm, another a leg, or a foot, or a hand, or the head. As to his teeth, if he have any left, he cannot dispose of them, any more than of his hair; these are the invariable perquisites of the servants.

And the Attendant's soul?

Jean cannot remember every thing, and he is not in the habit of thinking of that at all; the good Sisters will be sure to pray for it. But we believe that it started first, and is already gone to the devil. We conjure the reader not to send us to join it, and we will show our gratitude by wishing him no other attendant in sickness than a mother, a wife, a sister, or a friend.



THE CLERK



THE GOVERNMENT CLERK.

BY PAUL DUVAL.



IN France, there are as many varieties of Clerks as naturalists ascribe to the *Lepidoptères;* but notwithstanding the thousand shades of difference, there are amongst them, to the keen and careful observer, great points of resemblance and striking analogies; in whatever grade of administrative department they may be engaged, they have all in view one single object, one fixed idea, one common destiny.

Let us explain in a few words the routine of the Clerk's life. At thirty, having a salary of eighteen hundred francs a year, he marries an heiress with an income of six or eight hundred more; he takes a lodging, which must not cost him more than four hundred francs, at the further extremity of the Marais, or in one of the suburbs of Paris. He walks every day five miles to go to his office, and there fill up registers, copy letters, sort and arrange heaps of papers, deliver game-licences, passports, receipts, and warrants—or, again, to register those who arrive and those who depart; to make out the conscription-lists; to plan a bridge for this town, a school for the other, and a cavalry-barrack for a third; to circulate the thoughts and stories originating in Paris over France and Europe; from his leathern arm-chair, to keep a vigilant watch on the motions

of such a gambler or such a criminal, or the progress of such a conspiracy, and what not besides. Others must have an eye on the thirty-eight thousand French boroughs, to ascertain and provide for their wants, their wishes, their opinions, or all that relates to politics, trade, the public good, religion, morals, the preservation of health, and a thousand other things. Such are the Clerk's multifarious duties six hours of six days of the week. Sunday comes, on which day he does not rise till ten, and shaves much later than usual. Towards three he quits his dull suburb, and starts with his wife for Paris, where they walk two hours for an appetite, and dine for two francs at Richefeu's, on *perdrix aux choux*, a *salade de homard*, a *sole au gratin*, with a *méringue à la créme* for a dessert! After dinner they go in summer to the Champs Elysées, and in winter to Musard's Concert. At half-past ten they walk home, where they scarcely arrive before midnight—the poor wife almost dead with fatigue—and thus ends the day.

But the Clerk's family increases; he has at least two children, often three. After having all his life railed, cursed, and sworn at the profession chosen for him by his father,—after having exclaimed a thousand times with the personage in the *Fourberies de Scapin*, "Qu'allais-je faire dans cette galère?" he thinks himself most fortunate in obtaining a similar situation for his son, who, in his turn, will say and do as his father did and said before him. Such, until he is pensioned off—and of this phase of his life we shall have to speak hereafter—is the common destiny of the married Government Clerk.

The class of unmarried Clerks is much more numerous than that of the married. "What is the use of marrying?" say they: "if we marry for love, what misery not to be able to offer to the woman of our choice the thousand amusements, the charming nothings, the jewels, ribbons, and flowers, which go for so much to constitute female happiness! If, on the contrary, we marry, like too many others, merely for convenience, why thrust ourselves, without any compensation whatever, into the hornet's nest of nurses, doctors, and dress-makers' and milliners' bills? Let us try if it be not possible to live otherwise." Thus, alas! it is from poverty that the greater number doom themselves to celibacy, and, perhaps, are thus even more unhappy than those of their brethren who have ventured on matrimony. It is true, that the single Clerk is free, and proud of his liberty till he is forty. He dines at the table d'hôte at thirty-two sous, frequents the public walks, concerts, theatres, *bals champêtres*, and otherwise, and is occasionally animated by the fleeting excitement of an adventurous existence. But gradually the scene changes; his hair turns grey, he numbers forty-five winters, and the age of illusions passes away, never to return. Concerts, balls, and plays, amuse him no longer. What is to be done? To what innocent passion can he devote himself? How must he fill up his long summer mornings, his interminable winter evenings? Important questions, these! Dining at tables d'hôte is moreover become insufferable to him. He can no longer endure to meet each day new faces which he may never see again. Then, if he compare the flavourless soup, and the harmless liquids in which swim the meats at his table d'hôte, with the delicious dishes and sauces so exquisitely prepared in private families, what a difference suggests itself to his mind! From this time a great change takes place in the single Clerk's life; he renounces

the world, its amusements, its brilliant assemblies, to study a science, or devote himself to some quiet mania. He takes either to ornithology or numismatics, collects minerals, classes butterflies or shells, stuffs to the best of his abilities all his neighbours' dead canary birds, and subscribes to five or six illustrated editions. He ends by engaging a housekeeper, takes his meals at home, and settles down for life as comfortably as he can.

Strange inconsistency! It is certainly the business of the state to encourage and uphold marriage, for it is a guarantee for individual morality and social stability; and to regard it only in a political point of view, it is evident that a country where the number of bachelors exceeds that of married men will always be a prey to revolution. Notwithstanding this, the greater number of Government Clerks in France are forced to remain bachelors, and constrained to live in constant revolt against all laws, moral and divine. Thus the Government itself It is useless, we imagine, to push this argument any farther.

It has been calculated that the average salary of Government Clerks is about fifteen hundred francs. Fifteen hundred francs!

Yet with what eagerness do applicants crowd the ante-room when the places are distributed, each trying to be first in this most fortunate phalanx. They push, scramble, knock down, denounce, calumniate. All the deputies from one of the first departments in the kingdom will go to solicit the Ministre de l'Intérieur * or the Ministre des Finances †, for a clerkship with a salary of a thousand francs, and *perhaps* their request will be granted.

There were formerly, it must be acknowledged, situations under Government worthy of exciting the ambition of the thousands of young men with no patrimony save their education. These situations had commencing salaries of ten or twelve thousand francs. Those who were fortunate enough to obtain them used to go late to their office, and leave it early; and, in fact, whether they attended or not, the result seemed much the same, as, their proficiency being rather doubtful, the nation did not appear to suffer much from their idleness. To glance over a file of papers, to confer a quarter of an hour with the head of the office, the Secretary-General, or the Minister, to answer applications from persons of importance, to throw aside those from the obscure and unpatronized,—such were their daily tasks. In the evenings, they might be seen displaying a red ribbon and a joyous face, either in the Tuileries, or at one of the theatres. Happy days, those, and of easy work! But times are changed, and these situations are fast passing away. It is to the representative government—to honourable scrutinizers of the budget—that the suppression of these scandalous sinecures is owing. However, the multitude, who are ignorant of this reform, eagerly run after public employment with the same ardour, relying on the stability of their patrons. Imprudent applicants, consider the age we live in! Is there anything now-a-days permanent or lasting? Who can say to-day what power the parliamentary tempest may not destroy to-morrow? Look around you; each day some sanguine clerk, who had dreamt of a salary of twelve thousand francs, the red ribbon, and a snug sinecure, in vain

* Home Secretary. † Chancellor of the Exchequer.

looks for his vanished patron, and perceives with dismay that he must vegetate all his life in the subordinate grades of his administration.

An example will better illustrate the disenchantments reserved for the majority of Clerks, and show with what inexhaustible patience they must arm themselves, in order not to be discouraged by the dilatory excuses that retard their promotion. Take we a case at random from a thousand.

Felicien has the honour to hold a situation in a Government office in the country. He was twenty when he first entered: he is now thirty-two; thus he has served twelve years, and his character for punctuality and assiduity stands very high. Yet Felicien's salary is only twelve hundred francs; and as he is not without ambition, his efforts to obtain promotion are unceasing. How many letters has he not written, setting forth his rights, making mention of his useful services, his age, and the favourable reports of his superiors. How many times has he not entreated, supplicated, conjured the Deputy of his town personally to recommend him to the Minister, on whom depends his advancement,—and all in vain. Desperate with successive disappointments, Felicien resolves to take the journey to Paris, and apply in person at head-quarters: he procures a loan of a thousand francs, and sets off at once; he is soon in the Minister's ante-room, near the source of all patronage and favour. What could a Minister reply to a man who has served most satisfactorily during twelve years at a salary of twelve hundred francs, and whose demand was only for an additional two or three hundred? The Minister promises him the first place vacant.

"That of Verrières will soon afford an opening," answers Felicien, prepared for everything.

"Very well, then, you shall have it."

However, a week elapses, and his nomination is not signed: he now learns that the appointment is earnestly solicited by the protégé of an influential personage, and that it is in fact promised to him. "'Sdeath!" cries Felicien, "am I to lose my trouble in coming all the way to Paris?" Straightway he renews his application, drags two or three Deputies, *nolens volens*, to the Minister, gets Peers and Marshals to write to him, and even obtains a letter from some one at Court. In consequence of this formidable display of his forces, his rival is beaten back, and a few days after Felicien returns triumphantly to the Minister; but, instead of receiving the expected appointment, to his great mortification and astonishment, he is addressed as follows:—

"Sir, the Minister regrets exceedingly that he is not able to give you the situation you have solicited; but the justice that regulates all his appointments makes it his duty to nominate a clerk who has a family to support, and has served twenty-two years. Be assured, Sir"

"What!" interrupted Felicien, forgetting for a moment his usual caution, "is it my fault that you have been unjust to this poor man for so many years? I must then serve twenty-two years, and have half-a-dozen children, to qualify myself for a salary of fifteen hundred francs! The prospect is an agreeable one."

On the morrow of this fatal day, Felicien was on the road back to his own department.

How many clerks are there who, in the liberal or mechanical arts, might have established themselves in comfortable circumstances, by consecrating to their pursuits one quarter of the perseverance, tact, and sometimes real talent, that are required to advance, even very slowly, in a Government Office!

There are some Clerks who, being married, are afflicted with jealousy; others are totally exempt from this morbid disposition. There are also the timorous, the lounger, the plodder, the flatterer, the angler; some professing for politics the most profound indifference; others—attentive to the slightest movement of England, Russia, or Egypt—settle every morning the future fate of nations.

We shall attempt to set down a few slight traits of these interesting members of the animal kingdom.

Can a more dreadful existence be imagined than that of the jealous Clerk? Suppose him busily engaged in the duties of his office, writing to a mayor, a curate, or a tax-gatherer, or regulating the accounts of a borough situated two hundred leagues from Paris. All at once a fearful idea strikes him; and the questions, "My wife! where is my wife?—Is she at home?—Who is with her?"—suggest themselves to his imagination. He is no longer master of himself: unable to write two connected sentences, he clutches his pen with fury, and commits twenty errors in his calculations. It won't do. Completely subjugated by the demon Jealousy, he slips away, starts from his office, and arrives home breathless, under some pretext, to find his wife quietly seated at her piano, playing one of Musard's quadrilles, or Jullien's waltzes. He returns to his work tranquillized for a few hours. So far it is very well; but let the jealous Clerk beware lest he repeat these foolish visits too often. Over-dread of the monster will be certain to throw him under his paws; and as soon as he is thought to be suspicious, that instant his conjugal happiness is in jeopardy.

Is not the Clerk to whom the fearful passion of jealousy is unknown, a thousand times more fortunate?—Is he not always more calm, and more happy? He rises at his own hour, before or after his wife, as he pleases; is master at home, dines every day on his favourite dishes, goes to his office when he likes, and does there only what he likes. Occasionally, perhaps, a careful observer might remark a frown or an angry look; but in a few seconds the cloud passes away, and his features resume their wonted serene and happy look. In reality, what more can he desire? He has a pretty wife, advances rapidly without solicitation, and pockets, without trouble, many extra gratuities. His "Sécrétaire-Général," who has taken a great fancy to his youngest daughter, often selects him to inspect such a prison, such a stud, or the accounts of a country receiver-general; and his colleagues, gossiping round the fire, say of him, "It seems that Leopold's wife is going to present her lord with another pledge of their love, for he is just nominated head clerk. *E sempre bene!*"

We must not forget the timorous Clerk: this class admits of many subdivisions. First, there are those who live in continual dread of revolutions, of informations against him, and dismissals; but let us pass lightly over this variety, though worthy of compassion. Next comes he who dreads thirty years of his life to be behind time at his office; and the fear of not being able to sign in time on the morrow what in

office language is called the "Time Register," haunts him even in his sleep. He is always fearful of accidents or street stoppages, and has no confidence in his own watch, or in any clock, public or private. Once, perhaps, in his life, he is, by some unlooked-for casualty, retarded for five minutes. On such an occasion, his frightened and absent looks, the manner in which he rushes past the crowd, and the rapidity with which he skims over the asphalte pavements, are ludicrous and remarkable. He wants no omnibus: he leaves them all behind. At last he reaches his office; and, well known for his punctuality, escapes reprimand. So much the better; but it will be long ere he runs such a risk again, and for the next twelve months his name invariably stands first in every page of the Time Register.

I knew a martyr to this terrible Time Register. He was four-and-twenty, and over head and ears in love. One day, his mistress gave him an appointment the next morning at ten o'clock. "Ten o'clock!" thought he, when he had left her: "and the Register closes at a quarter past! And my future prospects! I, who have never yet been behind time! What will the head clerk say?" The poor young man did not go to his rendezvous. A fortnight afterwards, he had the satisfaction of meeting his charmer on the arm of one of his colleagues, who made a point of being ill twice a week.

There are shades amongst those varieties of Clerks, which to dwell upon would be useless, their designation being a sufficient description. Such are the idler, who contrives to work only an hour a day; the plodder, who is scrupulous of losing an instant; the *malade imaginaire*, who, for thirty years, fancies himself threatened with serious illness, expecting which he solicits frequent leaves of absence, and is bled and takes medicine regularly every fortnight; the joker, who is always propounding riddles and playing tricks; the flatterer, who is sometimes nicknamed by his fellow-clerks, "the Spy," &c. &c. The Pluralist demands a sketch to himself.

The hours of business in a public office are usually from ten to four o'clock. As long as the Clerk remains unmarried, he sleeps, or otherwise idles away the eighteen hours leisure afforded him by Government; but when he marries, and children bring poverty, he tries to make the best possible use of his spare time. Then, indeed, his life is the most laborious and varied imaginable. It is hardly six o'clock, when he is already up and copying deeds and abstracts for solicitors; he colours prints, gives lessons in drawing, or on the French horn, or perhaps writes articles for the pictorial magazines, or scribbles novels or compilations at fifty francs a volume, according to his intelligence or inclination. From ten till four he is at his office. His dinner over, at six he betakes himself to some theatre on the Boulevart, to play the bassoon; or, if he is no musician, he employs his evening in keeping the books of some tailor, grocer, or any other shopkeeper in his neighbourhood. Such is his daily existence till eleven o'clock. Poor victim to marriage!—what industry!—what self-denial! Setting these aside—thanks to his unremitting exertion for seventeen hours per diem—the pluralist Clerk succeeds in providing food and clothing for his wife and children, and adds eight or nine hundred francs to his Government salary of fifteen hundred.

Such are the principal types of the Clerk. His life in the country differs somewhat from that in Paris. In the first place, almost all country clerks are married,—

" Car, que faire en province, à moins qu'on s'y marie?"

and, married or single, they are more fortunate than their brethren in the capital. A comfortable existence is not radically impossible in the country; and they may see rich merchants and easy landholders live in no better style than themselves. Again, in small parochial towns, the Clerk meets with certain consideration. As a bachelor, his fifteen or eighteen hundred francs insure him a favourable reception with the mammas; and more than one young lady would prefer him to a prosperous tradesman, because with him she would have no shop to look after, would be able to dine at five o'clock, and would be received at "the prefecture." As a married man, he is invited and welcomed by the best families in the town, excepting, of course, the proud nobility of the place, unless his name be prefixed by the magic monosyllable *De*. If his wife be young, pretty, and clever, she is the intimate friend of *Madame la Préfete*, of *Madame la Générale*, or *Madame la Sous-Intendante*. [We ask the English reader's pardon, and assure him that in France these untranslatable words pass current in the country]. He is invited to all dinners, and goes to small as well as large parties at the Receiver-General's. What an enviable existence! And this is not all. Every evening, while the shopkeeper is still weighing or measuring his goods,—when the journeyman looks anxiously at the heavens, impatient for the tardy sunset,—when the industrious sempstress redoubles her activity, as she remembers that she has not yet earned her tenpence,—the cheerful and well-dressed Clerk and his wife sally forth for their evening walk; or, if it be winter, meet with other clerks and their families to play at *bouillotte* for a farthing the fish, or to gossip, criticise the ladies of their acquaintance, read the newspaper, and talk of their rights to advancement, till eleven o'clock.

Yet these Clerks are not perfectly happy: they have a grief, a canker-worm, in their imagination. Will it be credited?—They envy the Clerks in Paris. "Ah!" say they, "if we were in Paris, we should not be thus forgotten. There are neither advancement, nor favours, nor gratuities, but for Clerks in Paris. There is always some benefit arising from proximity to power. When shall we be able to go to Paris?" At last the day does arrive, when, after incredible privation, they are enabled to start on the grand journey; and as they have generally contrived to secure the good word of the Deputies, Peers, and Lieutenants-General of their several departments, they do not doubt, by good management, to accomplish the object of their wishes. But we need not follow them to the capital. The reader has not forgotten the disappointment and discomfiture of the unfortunate Felicien; and the same thing is of daily occurrence.

It is plain, then, that the Clerk is discontented in Paris,—that he is discontented in the country,—in a word, that he is happy nowhere. Generally, it may be said that there is not a more wearisome condition, a more uneasy and tormented existence. Imagine a man who, earning barely a subsistence, is compelled to solicit, beg, and cringe, to obtain what he considers due to him; and convinced, by sad necessity, that if he does not solicit, beg, and cringe, but resolves to wait patiently,

and trust to the impartiality of those in power, he will as surely die unpromoted. Knowing this alternative, what is to be done? He intrigues in his turn; he leaves no means untried; he clings to the patronage of those likely to become powerful; and sometimes, but very rarely, by dint of elbowing one, and jumping over the shoulders of another, he succeeds in leaving behind him those who have incontestible but unsupported claims, and secures a snug situation of eight or ten thousand francs.

However, while some are in despair, some cursing intrigue, and others benefitting by it, time is rolling on for all. The Clerk has served thirty years: the period for his retirement has arrived; but, alas! here again are new grievances and fresh disappointment. In his youth, the Clerk is ever pining for the day when he shall retire, break his chain, recover his liberty, his independence, his freedom of speech, &c. When the time really arrives, his language is no longer the same. He resembles the Woodman in the presence of Death, in the fable. "What! already," cries he. "What tyrannical injustice! I have scarcely begun to reap the fruit of my labour, and now I am dismissed; and with the stroke of a pen goes the one-half of my income! I who took so much pleasure in framing reports, auditing accounts, writing despatches, &c. What is to become of me?" The Clerk then invariably forgets that there was a time when he was indignant that the old should bar the road to the young. However, retire he must, willingly or unwillingly, in spite of all appeal; and if his children are all provided for, and there is nothing to keep him in Paris, he usually retires to some small town in its immediate vicinity, and not unfrequently lives till he is eighty,—happy when his savings have enabled him to purchase an acre of land, and subscribe, conjointly with the mayor of the place, to the oldest of the opposition newspapers.

There are some sad exceptions to this resignation and longevity. "Have you heard the news?" says sometimes one of the clerks, as he mends his pen, to his comrades in the office. "Have you heard the news of old A——, our pensioned head clerk?"

"No.—What of him?"

"You know that he retired to the environs of Chantilly, at the entrance of a charming village, surrounded by magnificent vegetation; but it was the verdure of his papers, not that of the fields, that he cared for, poor man! As soon as he had ceased to see them about him, his health began to decline; he lingered six months; he who used to be so contented and happy in his office! His spirits entirely forsook him; a slow disease gradually undermined his health, and wore his body to a shadow."

"And how is he now?"

"Very well: he died yesterday!"



THE KEEPER OF THE TABLE D HOTE



THE KEEPER OF THE TABLE D'HOTE.

BY AUGUSTE DE LACROIX.



ERGING towards your twenty-fifth year, and a stranger in Paris, we will suppose you, gentle reader, recently arrived in that city, where you come to mourn the loss of a rich uncle who made you his heir. After having visited every place of amusement, and duly admired all the lions of the metropolis of the civilized world—the superb chess-board of the Place Louis XV., its marble knights, sculptured kings and queens, and gilded pawns; the graceful pirouettes of the sisters Elssler, the Royal Menagerie, the Chamber of Deputies, and the Concerts-Musard—as you are departing one evening from a noted restaurant's, where you have dined very indifferently for ten francs, you suddenly remember, to your great astonishment, that in all your peregrinations you have hitherto neglected one of the most interesting curiosities of Paris—one that is distinguished by its peculiar features, and is always striking, animated, and original—one that invites you by its charms, and which still may resemble, in its enjoyment, the imperfect reality of a pleasant dream, which is good in itself, yet with which you have the undoubted right to find fault—a Table d'Hôte in Paris.

Accordingly, a few minutes before six the next day, ciceroned by a friend, you

are making your way towards the Boulevart des Italiens, or one of the principal streets near it, and you repair to the first or second floor of a mansion of elegant exterior. You are ushered into a magnificent apartment, already occupied by a numerous and brilliant party. Your protector immediately introduces you without ceremony to the mistress of the house, who receives you like an old friend; and you presently pass, with the rest of the company, into the dining-room, which is set out in dazzling style. The glittering table is laid for no less than fifty, and the guests seem to be all people of consideration. The ladies are generally young, pretty, and elegantly dressed; and display, with more or less advantage, their black or blue eyes, the touching expression of their English beauty, or the charming vivacity of their Parisian physiognomy. The mistress of the house is forty years of age; she is tall, somewhat faded, often aiming at effect, and speaks with elegance. She is fond of talking of her intercourse with fashionable society, her aristocratic friends, and her misfortunes; for the lady who presides over a Table d'Hôte at six francs a head, has invariably been handsome, rich, and noble. In truth, tears have slightly tarnished her beauty. The tyrant to whom her innocence and her fortune were confided, equally abused the one and the other, and though you now behold the victim under the simple designation of Madame Veuve Martin, you may be sure this is only a precaution dictated by honourable pride. Her real name is illustrious, and her family highly distinguished. It is rarely that this oft-told tale, softly breathed in the ear of some old Celadon, fails to draw a deep sigh of sympathy from the happy confidant. In truth, the plot of the story is not new, and to this are entirely owing its merit and success. We have doubts in store for the singular, and listen incredulously to any thing out-of-the-way; while simple possibilities of not unfrequent occurrence gain unsuspected credence. But Madame Veuve Martin's talent shines particularly in the details. What skill she displays in varying the episodes of her tale according to the quality and presumed taste of her auditor! What delicate work on the worn-out canvass! With what marvellous tact does she skip what might displease, and avoid difficulties, and reconcile contradictions! Artistically viewed, her profound diplomacy, her studied rhetoric of coquetry, are worthy of the highest admiration.

It would require great experience, or almost supernatural penetration, clearly to see though these dazzling clouds, and discover the truth, which in its primitive nakedness would not always be seen to the best advantage. Madame Veuve Martin is not, in fact, so unfortunate as she wishes to appear, and her grief is not so deep as to exclude all consolation. Though you sometimes surprise her in tears, they are not shed for her fallen fortunes, nor even for her somewhat damaged reputation. Madame Veuve Martin's regret has a more solid foundation, and is not inaptly expressed in the well-known burthen* of Beranger's celebrated song, *La Grand-mère.*

To tell the truth, Madame Veuve Martin did not first see the light in a richly-furnished chamber, but in the humble garret of a porter, that poetical birth-place,—

* "Ah! que je regrette
Mon bras si dodu,
Ma jambe bien faite,
Et le tems perdu!"

that productive nest which constantly supplies the numberless pretty women who are in turn the delight and the despair of superannuated gallants and young beginners in the career of love. Thence, one fine morning, Madame Martin first tripped lightly on the theatre of the world, like the numerous charming creatures of her sex who figure on the boards of the "Grand Opera," on the tight rope of Madame Saqui, or in the humble shop of the dress-maker. She has since travelled over Europe in all ways, and under every kind of name: on foot, on horseback, in post-chaise, carriage, diligence, inside and outside, according to the various phases of her fluctuating fortune. Madame Martin has observed and learnt much; she speaks several languages, has deeply studied the manners of many nations, and knows the human heart like the contents of a well-known book. Her virtue has been exposed to many trials, and her destiny united to many destinies. She has descended a great part of the river of life in company with an infinity of compassionate passengers and generous pilots. After having softened in her seventeenth year the last moments of one of the oldest glories of the Empire, she followed the fortunes of a young lord, who took her successively to London, Florence, Vienna, and thence to Russia, where he left her, on the shores of the Black Sea, together with his horses and carriages, in the possession of a band of Cossacks. Her new masters sold her to a Jew, by whom she was sold to a Turk, who, in his turn, handed her over to the Dey of Algiers, who brought her with him to Paris, in 1831. In one of the first quarters of the metropolis she then opened several rich shops, for the sale of shawls, damasks, rich stuffs, perfumes, and jewellery that the Dey had *not* given her. A young clerk, to whom she confided her heart and her wares, betrayed the one and sold the other, under the pretext of avenging the Dey, who never knew anything about it. Madame Martin then entered into friendly relation with a circle of amiable ladies, who advised her to establish a Table d'Hôte, in a first-rate style, with the wrecks of her fortune, offering to support the establishment with the spell of their good looks and agreeable conversation.

Madame Martin is not only a clever woman; she is a respectable lady, ornamented, like the virtuous Cornelia, with the appendage of a charming daughter, carefully brought up away from the maternal roof, which she is never allowed to visit, except on the days and at the hours that Mamma in her wisdom has expressly appointed. On these occasions, Madame Martin's company includes the élite of her customers. The ladies are few in number, rather plain, and not remarkable for elegance of toilette; but the gentlemen are of the right age and fortune. Mademoiselle Martin is a tall brunette of seventeen, who dances the Cachuca at school, and writes all her schoolfellows' love-letters: but here she plays the character of a school-miss to the life; her looks are bashful, and her eyes cast on the ground. The compliments and somewhat warm exclamations that greet her always unexpected appearance, cause her a charming confusion, and she hastens to conceal her face in her Mamma's arms with a sentiment of virgin modesty that delights the company, and wins the admiration of the most experienced gentlemen present.

Among these is always one about fifty years of age, of reputed fortune, and known liberality. He is generally designated, by the frequenters of the table, as "the Protector." To him Madame Martin hastens to present her daughter. After

receiving the paternal kiss on the forehead, having duly blushed, and creditably gone though the first act of her part, Madamoiselle Martin takes her seat at the piano, and proceeds, after a moment's prelude, to sing, in a subdued contr'alto, a French ballad or some Italian *aria*. Then follows the scene of infantile frolics, innocent enticements, charming poutings; after which the young lady courtesies to the company, and returns to her convent, there to remain until her protector thinks proper for her to leave definitively.

There is also among the guests one who might on occasion pass for Madame Martin's husband; a man of handsome face, decorated with large black whiskers, diamond rings on several fingers, and a gold chain, to which is fastened an eye-glass. This gentleman, conjointly with Madame Martin, does the honours of the table; his administration includes two departments, and his genius is exercised in turn in the dining and drawing rooms. At table he carves, and at play he retrieves, with equal dexterity, the evil strokes of fortune towards himself and the parties whose side he takes.

The guests are generally old bachelors, state pensioners, ancient stock-brokers, retired merchants, superannuated government officers, and half-pay generals. Young men rarely appear at such establishments as this, and are never received here with the same welcome that greets them elsewhere. Mature age is an indispensable qualification for admission. The dinner, let us add, is excellent, elegantly served, and the wines are unexceptionable. More than one connoisseur affirms that the dinner you have just taken, and which cost you six francs, is worth ten. In that case, what comes of the interesting widow's speculation? You shall hear.

Dinner being over, you return to the drawing-room, where tables have been prepared for play. At the invitation of the mistress of the house, you take a seat at one, and lose twenty-five louis in a quarter of an hour. If fortune should favour you, in spite of the dextrous skill of your antagonist, the lady seated next you, who appeared to take so warm an interest in your success, will infallibly ask you on rising for a seat in your carriage, and you may soon convince yourself that she is prepared to give you in return a place in her heart.

Leaving this class of Tables d'Hôte, let us now pay a visit, in their turn, to the establishments frequented by the middle classes,—the Table d'Hôte of two and a half or three francs. Here you see very few, if any, female faces; but to compensate for their absence, men are numerous, and generally young. The foreigner of limited income who is in Paris to spend the winter, the young journalist, the provincial enriched by a recent legacy, the unmarried merchant, the government clerk, compose the list of visitors. Differing in this respect from first-rate establishments of the same kind, chance visitors are rare, the ladies less elegantly dressed, and the gentlemen of less superannuated gallantry. Conversation is general, easy, often interesting, and nearly always finishes at the dessert, in a noisy discussion on politics, literature, the fine arts, or the state of the money-market. Sometimes all three subjects are agitated at once, from one end of the table to the other; when the hubbub might make the visitor fancy himself in the gallery of the Funambules, or in the Chamber of Deputies on a day when ministerial members batter down some deputy of the Opposition by a skilful manœuvre of the ivory

paper-knives, with the accompaniment of the parliamentary cough. There is no card-room, coffee being served in the dining-room after cheese and a plain dessert. Sometimes, however, two of the oldest of the customers sit down in a corner of the apartment to a quiet game at écarté. The women, if any be present, take no interest in such a harmless contest, and the company break up to attend to their business or their pleasure.

The dinner itself is good and homely, like the guests,—neither magnificent nor mean; just such as might be wished for his old age by an artist not intoxicated by glory, or a respectable citizen from Quimper or Lons-le-Saulnier.

These Tables d'Hôte of the second degreee have generally a double feature, being lodging, as well as boarding houses. For two francs more a day, each guest may become at the same time tenant of one or two rooms (according to their dimensions and the style of the furniture), his sojourn in which the mistress of the house tries all in her power to make agreeable and comfortable. The latter is a lively, bustling, and agreeable little woman, who is horrified neither by a hazarded compliment, nor a stray double-entendre. Her business is to be on good terms with her guests from six in the morning till midnight, exclusively; her skill consists in never going beyond those limits. The prosperity and good order of the establishment depend on the scrupulous observance of this principle. The first duty of her profession is to construe the *word* as meaning nothing, to promise eternally, to keep up rivalry between her guests without bad feelings, and constantly to preserve her virtue between these two dangers,—too much, and too little. For this reason, the president of a Table d'Hôte at three francs ought to be thirty years old, to have dark hair, a graceful form, an experienced eye, and a fluent tongue; and it would be as well if she had played for five years, or less, the part of *coquette* in the country or abroad. If to all these qualifications be joined love of order and economy, and a heart at once inflexible on the score of payment, and insensible to declarations of love from her customers, her fortune is assured. At forty-five she sells her business, irrevocably unites her destiny with that of some seductive commercial traveller, and both retire into the country to taste the sweets of conjugal life, at the rate of two hundred pounds a year.

Immediately below these intermediate establishments, ranks the Table d'Hôte at twenty-five sous, which is worthy of particular notice. It is always situated beyond the Barriers, which accounts for its humble pretensions. Its physiognomy is so changeable as to defy the most skilful attempt at analyzation. No distinctive features, no defined lines, no generalities, no ensemble; but striking individualities, the most marked contrasts, a confused mixture of countenances, languages, and costumes the most dissimilar. The Italian refugee and the intrepid Pole daily represent the exiled hero living on his love of liberty and thirty francs a month from the Government. The unsuccessful literary adventurer, the unknown artist, the unfortunate speculator, the half-pay lieutenant, the supernumerary clerk, the hawker, the woman in search of what Diogenes sought at mid-day with a lantern, the Don Quixote of the public street, the speculator of doubtful character, the man who lives on the police funds,—all these, closely packed side by side, eat, drink, laugh, talk, cry, and swear, for twenty-five sous a head, coffee included: toothpicks are charged extra. There are also cheap cigars for smokers of both sexes; for here, the fairest

half of mankind will not hesitate, in order to please the other, to adopt tastes and habits the most opposed to female delicacy.

Do not, however, be discouraged: happy exceptions and consoling contrasts everywhere exist; honest faces and decent figures are frequently seen, here and there, among the more or less savage-looking faces that extend along the table in two parallel and moving lines; here and there, elegant conversation and polite words are exchanged between two neighbours. This kindred feeling of education is recognized at a glance: one instinctively seeks one's equals, and words are interchanged; the number of these visitors of congenial disposition increases; they centralize, and presently form a knot that goes on increasing, and a little society apart, into which the rough-beards of the place do not like to venture.

A characteristic feature of the Table d'Hôte at twenty-five sous is the presence of one or two pretty women (according to the importance of the concern), who free themselves regularly every day from the prosaic tribulations of payment. These ladies are placed at the centre of the table; they are not more than five-and-twenty, rather pretty, and, above all, very amiable. The colour of their hair is not of great importance, but brunettes are preferred, as being the most piquant, and of most certain and general effect. On these conditions, these ladies are treated with every mark of attention, and dine every day for the love of God and their neighbour. These female parasites, who are generally called *flies*, on account of the lightness of their behaviour, or perhaps by analogy with the parts they play on this occasion*, are nevertheless only to be met at the Tables d'Hôte of the highest and lowest degree. They do not appear at the Table d'Hôte at three francs: the mistress of the house excludes them with a vigilance that profits at once morality and her coquetry,—two incompatibilities that she alone has found means to reconcile.

If ever, in one of those fits of erratic humour to which all true Parisians are periodically subject at the return of spring, you should take it into your head to pass the Barrier, in order to behold, from the height of Montmartre, the setting of the sun, allow me to join you, and direct your poetical excursion. In the first place, particular reasons, which you shall soon know, compel me to take you in preference through the Barrière Pigale. Instead of commencing forthwith our ascent up the opposite street, let us turn to the left, and cross the Boulevarts. It is only half-past five, and the sun will not set yet these two hours. Perhaps you have not dined?—No. Then permit me to offer you a dinner at the Barrière. Bah! a little shame is soon overcome, and I promise not to betray you to your friends of the Café de Paris. Here we are, exactly opposite the Table d'Hôte of M. Simon. Look up and read, then, on the right of that little green door with a lattice, on the bill pasted on the wall:—"Table d'Hôte at one franc twenty-five centimes, every day, at half-past five o'clock." Come, no one is looking at you—come in with me.

The tables are already laid in the garden, under an arbour of vine and honeysuckle, covered with canvass in the form of a tent. Let us take our seats, and do not be impatient. It is, in truth, six o'clock, and dinner was announced at half-past five—by the watch of the master of this house. Now, by a general rule, the

* The Police Spies, in France, are commonly called *Mouches*, "Flies."

watch of the master of a Table d'Hôte is always half an hour too slow: this, added to a quarter of an hour generally allowed, makes nearly an hour. During this time, the soup may be cooling, and the shoulder of mutton burning; but customers drop in, the dishes are served, and the receipts are saved.

That individual near the centre of the table, solidly planted in his chair, wearing a Grecian cap slightly inclined over his left ear, and inclosed in a round jacket, is M. Simon, the master of the house. His eye wanders complacently over the crowd of stooping heads, while he helps the smoking soup right and left. M. Simon never speaks, except to give orders. His words are solemn, and his voice authoritative; his countenance is expressive of the full consciousness of the personal dignity and high responsibility that devolve on him. In the intervals between the courses, he may occasionally join in the conversation of those sitting on his right and left; but he is constantly watching the movements of his guests. Should any of them complain, he quiets them by a smile, calms their impatience, and censures, by look and voice, the tardiness of the cook and waiters. M. Simon is evidently used to command: there is an imposing self-possession in all his person, and an admirable precision in his slightest movements. M. Simon must have been either a sub-lieutenant, the leader of an orchestra, or the conductor of a diligence.

That thin, lively, nimble little woman, whom you see incessantly gliding round the table, and from the table to the kitchen, is Madame Simon. Five-and-twenty years ago, her grey hair was perhaps a lovely auburn; her figure was then possibly rounded and elastic; there is no reason to believe that the bloom of the rose never flourished on her cheeks; and I would not bet that her small eyes never kindled more than one flame.

Be this as it may, Madame Simon appears to be constantly walking on live coals: her movements are ricketty, her gesture stiff, and the sharp angles of her form are visible in strong relief through her short and scanty gown. Impatience and constraint are revealed in the habitual obliquity of her look; bitterness is in her smile, and subdued anger lurks beneath the yellow corners of her round eyes. She replies in a bitter-sweet voice to the numerous applications made to her, and seems to wish to clutch with her bony fingers the gratuitous supplements wherewith she is compelled to satisfy the cravings of refractory stomachs. Her whole figure has an old-maidish look; and there are ample grounds for divorce in the sad and languishing looks she turns from time to time on her husband. In a physiological point of view, Madame Simon's is an eminently bilious-nervous temperament. We do not comprehend Madame Simon at all.

Considered with reference to her industrial position, Madame Simon is a precious woman. She orders the invariable bill of fare, superintends the laying of the cloth, the preparation of the soup, and collects, between the second course and the salad, the accustomed tribute from the guests. For this last operation, she uses a formula that does much honour to her politeness, if not to her imagination. As she performs her diurnal course round the table, she lightly taps the shoulder of each inattentive guest in succession, and holding ready her palm, says, in almost a whisper, "Sir, I begin with you." And at every pause in her round she renews her smile, like an experienced collector; and repeats, as blandly as before, the fatal and eternal, "Sir, I begin with you." Artists have been observed to start at the

sound of her cracked and croaking voice, and to shudder at the contact of her bony fingers.

The individual whom you are examining with uneasy curiosity, as if you fancied you had seen his face elsewhere, is one of those wandering traders who, in obedience to the orders of the police, transport, from shop to shop, their merchandize at reduced prices, and their silk handkerchiefs at a franc and a quarter. That stout lady, with a large bust and a jolly countenance, who takes her wine neat, peppers her spinach, and plants her elbows on the table, is the contraband trader's helpmate. She it is who is constantly stationed at the door of her husband's shop,—a living advertisement. She represents, in turn, the stranger attracted by curiosity, or the citizen's wife, enticed by the cheap price and tempting colours of the goods. It is her duty to cry up incessantly the excellent quality of the wares, and to pretend to buy, in order to push sales. She is a variety of the family of *flies*.

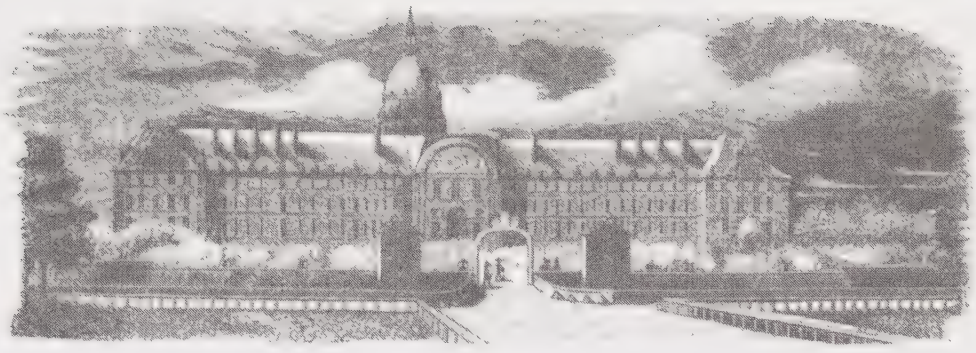
The grotesque personage to whom you seem to be listening with a sort of interest, is a character peculiar to Tables d'Hôte, and deserves a few words of description. The fatal monomania with which he is affected has not yet obtained a name from science. That man daily devours, before his dinner, the contents of every daily and weekly — literary, scientific, political, and artistical — newspaper and journal published in Paris and the provinces, without omitting a single line, from the shipping intelligence to the last sale by auction, both inclusive. This Gargantua of the periodical press naturally feels a desire to lighten his memory of part of this prodigious and indigestible consumption. Notice to his unfortunate neighbour. He will catch you at a word, and force upon you all the puffs, paid paragraphs, and half-guinea *reclames* that are to his taste. He is, moreover, emphatical, and a rhetorician, like a professor of grammar in a village school. His heavy and wire-drawn phraseology falls on your ear like molten lead, poured, drop by drop, on the occiput of a criminal. Appearance as follows:—Age, fifty years; tall, lean, and bilious-looking; wears a threadbare coat, buttoned close up to his cravat, strapless inexpressibles, and a red wig.

That little man, enthroned yonder at one end of the table, reminds one felicitously of the sign of the Glutton. There are the same signs of sensuality, the same expansive, shining, and highly-coloured face, with triple chin, small bright eyes, deeply sunk in the head, low forehead, and uneasy look. There you see gluttony at strife with avarice—a gourmand dining for twenty-five sous!

My portraits would never be over, if I attempted merely to sketch the most striking of all the originals of which the Table d'Hôte at twenty-five sous affords so rich and varied a collection. To Madame Simon alone belongs the faculty of seizing and understanding them at a glance, and making them contribute marvellously to the general harmony and prosperity of the establishment. To bring together extremes, to overcome physical and moral antipathies, to watch at once over the ensemble and the details, to combine the legislative and the executive in a single person, and control and regulate this crowd of rival pretensions and jaws in competition,—such is the great art of the Keeper of a Table d'Hôte,—such is the triumph and the glory of Madame Simon.



THE PENSIONER.



THE PENSIONER.

BY A. LORENTZ.



UDGING that I should have plenty of time to visit the Hôtel of the Invalids*, I hired a coach a few days ago, at half-past three precisely, and proceeded thither, little thinking that the doors were invariably closed to visitors at four o'clock. Vexed and disappointed at having travelled all the way to the Gros Caillou without attaining my object, I entered into one of the coffee-houses upon the Esplanade, to await the arrival of a hackney-coach which was to restore me to my household gods. I had taken possession of a small isolated apartment on the first floor, which commanded a full view of the Hôtel. I had just discussed a glass of effervescing lemonade, when I heard, through the partition of my private room, a conversation which interested me. The voices apparently proceeded from the grand saloon; and much time had not elapsed before I left my solitary situation, and in a very indiscreet manner established myself in the vicinity of two journeymen, seated opposite each other, with a bottle of wine and a number of the "Pictures of the French" before them. This last fact increased my curiosity to a considerable extent, and I listened very attentively to the following conversation:—

"Why didn't you come sooner? I can't get you passed into the Invalids now; the watchword is given out, 'No further admittance.' There 's no help for it, so you must give it up for a bad job, my fine friend, at any rate for to-day. It is a great pity though; for I think I may, without vanity, boast that there's not a lad in all Paris, let alone the outskirts, who knows the Hôtel as perfectly as your humble servant, Colopeau. Here, waiter, *a ropal of the very lummiest yellow tape lush.*

* The Chelsea Hospital of France.

Ha! ha! ha!—that fool of a waiter can't understand anything. Come, look awake, man. Some white wine: that at a franc."

"How strong you are coming it!"

"Not at all, not at all. You shall pay for this; I'll pay for the next,—leastways if we want any more. Here's to Nini,—to Nini, beloved of my soul! Are you a right 'un, eh?"

"Of course I am."

"A right, straightforward, regular, honest fellow,—eh?"

"Certainly."

"Tip us your paw, then; I'll trust you with my intentions. You are well aware that your friend is the president of the Lyrical Society of the Friends of Three Colours, singing and dancing, every Sunday and Monday, at Father Gigot's, tavern and public-house-keeper, sign of the Conquering Hero, at the Barrière Mont Parnasse, Boulevart Exterieur. Fun, gaiety, honour to the visitors, and homage to the ladies. All this, of course, arranged by me; for arn't I his crack author? and don't I write him all his songs, which, I flatter myself, are something out of the common way? Well, my friend, since you are a regular good fellow, I shall entrust to you my posthumous works before I kick the bucket, and you shall enjoy the high privilege of printing them in your leisure moments."

"Yes, but recollect, I am not a compositor, but only a printer."

"For my part, I am a compositor, and by no means a printer. That is the reason why I do not make my lyrical productions known to the world; otherwise I should, even at the present moment, occupy no foolish position, I should imagine, in the publication of 'The French, drawn by Themselves,' to which my patriotism, and duty as a citizen and drummer, have led me to subscribe. I'd furnish your M. Curmer*, or whatever his name is, with sketches of character: he who never gives anything else but sketches of genteel people, such as never had any existence in reality. I would, for instance, do him the Tippler, the Bully, the Professor of Slang, the Shoe-black, the Horse-skinner, the Tripeman, the Scavenger, the Bricklayer's Labourer, the Lemonade-seller at a farthing a glass, the Dealer in Potatoes fried in water, the Dutch Company with their gravy soup concocted of old bones, the Lamplighter, the Walking Gentleman of the Funambules, the Tenor of Lazari, the Miscreant at Madame Saqui's, the Thief's Public-house-keeper, the Informer, the Escaped Convict, the Incorrigible Pickpocket, the Larker, the Drummer, the Pensioner, and a thousand others to boot, eh? These *are* sketches of character, and no mistake. It's not like your Law Student. What's there in that, I should like to know? Law Student—gammon! He lives in the Faubourg St. Germain. What then? The Grisette, too; she's as well known as summer cabbage. Let those smart fellows, Henri Monnier, Jules Janin, and Gavarni, look to themselves; I'd soon dress their hides for them, I warrant—I, Fanfan la Blague, the king, the emperor of singers and funny fellows. If I only knew your M. Curmer by sight, I'd go and give him all this myself; and I'd say to him, 'Look here, my fine fellow, I don't ask you for anything. I make the reputation of your book. Well and good; I oblige you; you, of course, are grateful for it,—so you ought to be; we'll go and have a bottle together, you shall pay for it, and whenever you want any writing in future, come and find me out.' However, that you may judge

* The name of the Publisher of the Paris Edition.

of the knack that I have of hitting off the portrait of the first comer, I will just show you "The Pensioner," which I had brought on purpose to read to you after our visit to the Hospital, written and composed by your humble servant Colopeau, house-painter by profession, and poet in his leisure. There, call for a bottle of wine; and, without stirring from the spot, I will show you all over the Invalids, which you came too late to see."

The bottle being brought, the painter took a long draught, rolled his tongue about in his mouth, wiped his lips, and proceeded to enter at once, body and soul, into his character of spokesman. His listener was breathless from friendship, delight, and interest.

"First of all, do you know when the Hospital for the Pensioners was first invented?—No, you don't know: do you? Well, then, it was immediately after the Foundling Hospital: two slap-up inventions which were contemporary; and we may say (speaking, as it were, *metaphosphorically*) that the great Louis XIV. was the St. Vincent de Paul of the worn-out veterans of the French army. So much for the first. However, to be just, we must own that Henry IV. (who, by the by, was nothing of a one-handed fellow in any of his doings) first had the idea of it; and so for number two; and I calculate that I know above a little of what I am talking about, seeing as how I am the son of a wooden leg myself. In those times, Louis XIV. said to a chap that they called Libéral Bruant, an *artichect*, 'You'll just have the kindness,' says he, 'to make me a plan—something slap-up, mind you—for to stow away all the military cripples in my army. But I wish to have something out-and-out, recollect; and as for the expense, why, we won't quarrel about a few five-franc pieces more or less. You know very well that I'm not at all a stingy old file.' 'Certainly,' says the *artichect*; and immediately he tips him the house that you now see from the window. See there, my boy; just look at that. What do you think of the style of that, eh? They don't build many things like that now: they 've lost the receipt.

"After that, Louis XIV. says to another stone-mason, 'You'll do me the favour,' says he, 'to build me a church, with a dome all in gold.' 'Good,' says Mansard; 'I'll build you a *metropolis*, that I warrant will be quite the ticket.' And lo and behold, that *chef d'œuvre* that you can likewise view from this window here. Then all the sculptors and house-painters, and people of that kind, came and made a deuce of a business of it. Lastly, that hero, both in love and in war, the great Louis XIV., King of France and of Navarre, made a will, just before he went to the right-about-face.——Stay; stop a minute; let me try and remember the never-to-be-forgotten words, which I recollect to have learnt when a youngster at the school of the Invalids, where I was drummer. These are them; I've got them:—'Of all the different establishments that we have made during the length of our reign, there is none more useful to the State than the Esplanade of the Invalids. It is quite correct that the soldiers who have been killed in the wars should receive the reward of their long services, so as to be quite out of condition to work, and earn their living. The corporals and other officers will find there a table of the right sort, and no mistake; and we must just beg the Dauphin to observe that care must be taken of the establishment. This applies as well to all our successors. We are persuaded, beforehand, that they will be delighted to do anything to oblige us.'

" Some time after, reigned Louis XV., surnamed the Well-beloved, a grandson of Louis XIV., a great lazy dog, who spent all the poor people's money upon creatures of very free-and-easy and Saint-Simonian-like ideas. The great idiot didn't care a curse about the dying injunction of his illustrious grandfather; but chose to forget the services of his brave old soldiers, to reward the services of his dearies. But look you, Pierroux, how crime always brings with it its own punishment. The Revolution came, and destroyed Louis XVI., for to prove as how his predecessor had behaved himself like an inhabitant of the sea, that politeness prevents me from naming. In fact, my good fellow, that great *roué*, Louis XV., positively had the atrocity to have bedaubed with yellow paint, that magnificent dome that you have there before your innocent eyes. At that time, the house was conducted upon a very cheap and nasty principle. Luckily, the year '93 arrived at last; but people were much too occupied then to care anything about the old soldiers. There were more men spificated upon the frontiers, and in foreign parts, than there are hairs in my head, by reason of Father Emperor giving up the Consulate to enter upon *Imperialization*. Then the great little man restored the Invalids to their original splendour. He had the dome regilded; and then (that was, of course, a part of his profession) he had the church adorned with all the colours that had been taken from the enemy, by the valour of his Ex*; and at the same time, he sent all the surplus of the cannon of the column of Vendôme to the building of the Esplanade. Well and good; there are the Pensioners at last settled in a decent and military fashion. The silver dish now circulates in the Hospital, the same as upon the table of Napoleon himself. The kitchens have batteries charged with ammunition, which discharge, daily, missiles of the most leguminous, carnal, succulent, and savoury nature, to say nothing of the sweets.

" The Pensioner can, in living with his better-half, console himself about the half of his body that he has lost. The children are put to school at the expense of Government, and everything goes on quite straight, provided a man mounts his guard in his proper turn, and loves and respects his Governor, who is something like a Marshal of France. Then there are, moreover, all sorts of amusements. There 's the game of skittles, and the game of bowls, and the game of Siam, and the game of the tub,—in fact, every game; and, what 's more than all, a first-rate library, and in it the portrait of Napoleon Bonaparte.

" By the bye, that reminds me of a circumstance that made me cry in fine style. If you had seen it, you'd have cried too. There are men for you, true to the backbone, faithful fellows, and such as one can really depend upon. An old fellow there, an old good fellow, an old old fellow, a venerable fellow, quite white hair, and very little of it: scarcely a breath left in him; his eyes raised towards Heaven, where he is upon the point of going: scarcely can he utter a sound. They press round him; silence is obtained; he is on the point of death; but before he dies, something is necessary to his happiness; he wishes, poor old fellow, he wishes to see his Emperor. This is not exactly convenient: he's at St. Helena, it's a long way off, and it's strictly forbidden to go there; moreover, the old boy hasn't time, —he can't last half an hour. O! there! it is his idea, he who is ill,—those that are well never think of anything: before the portrait of my Emperor he gasps; they

* Colopeau means the Imperial Guard.

carry him there. Oh, it breaks my very heart to think of it: this poor brave old boy—look! he smiles, he weeps, he is choking, all around him groan; there, he is rather quieter now, his eyes are dried; there are no more tears or oil in the lamp. Gone! gone! Good God! good God! I am crying at it even now, and so are you. Come, let's have a drain to his memory; to the health of trustworthy friends. Ah! that sets me to rights a little. I must say I prefer moistening my clay, to moistening my cheeks (and he wiped his eye). Another little drop; so the bottle's empty. Here, waiter, another of the same."

The journeyman then drew from his pocket several small figures of men drawn upon pasteboard, and cut out. I advanced towards them, and asked the painter and glazier permission to join in their conversation, explaining to him at the same time the cause of my presence in the vicinity of the Gros Caillou. He appeared flattered by the desire I expressed to make one of his audience, and he began thus—

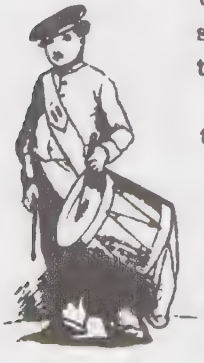
"'Valour need never wait to number years
He needs no forefathers who serves the state
A lucky soldier was the first of kings
Who perils nothing ne'er with glory triumphs'

"'Valour, &c.' There, that's something that is'nt very far from the truth, with respect to these old tipplers of Pensioners; viz., that it was quite necessary there should be no waiting a number of years before they could come with glory to be kept warm and comfortable, and to be fed and lodged at the expense of Government.

"'He needs, &c.' That he needs no ancestors, as this here line tells us, is again very true. A man doesn't want a forefather to be a Pensioner, as he is, in a general way, quite old enough to be his own forefather.

"'A lucky soldier, &c.' This is truer than ever, as we all know that the Pensioners are not the kings of France. This is easily enough explained by the fact, that the first king was a first soldier, but since that time, having had a tolerable quantity of soldiers, and very few kings, it is no longer extraordinary that the Pensioner should not be king of France.

"'Who perils, &c.' This is the reason why our old crippled, withered, hop-and-go-on veterans have invariably been covered, and always will be covered, with glory, all the world over, seeing that their triumphs have never been achieved without great dangers: and while upon this subject, I must say that I honour and respect the individual whose name I don't however know, whose verses with regard to the old soldiers are quite the ticket. I, likewise,—I'll write you some verses upon the old soldiers, and the first subject I'll take shall be the old Pensioner: but then a man must know them, as I know them, to do the thing at all properly."



I now asked him to begin: he calmed his enthusiasm a little, took breath, and showed me his little pasteboard figures.

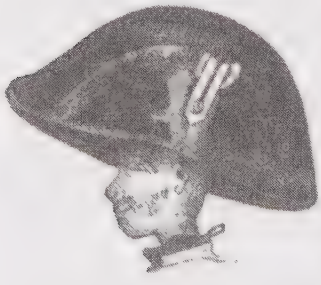
"This, Sir, represents a little boy with a drum, which he is in the act of beating; he has on an uniform, which is that of the drummers of the Pensioners. The children of all the cripples of the place form part of the staff of the Hôtel. I speak to you knowingly upon the subject, since I handled the drumsticks a little myself, in the building of Louis XIV.



"This fellow that you see next, with the crooked legs and round back, in his uniform and his cotton nightcap on, is the inspecting corporal, who is going his rounds. What the devil is all this row about? what an infernal noise. Ah, it's the breakfast hour; regular helter-skelter of all the old human machinery, who march as bravely to the table as they formerly did to battle.

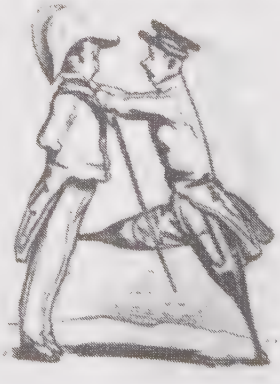
"What do I see here, in that patent arm-chair? Ah, it is one of the glorious remains of the Ex——, who has lost both his legs, and both his arms. He is, however, in the perfect enjoyment of his trunk. What do I see by his side?—A pretty young girl, with eyes as soft as velvet, and the manners of a dove. Ah! she has just been giving the trunk something to drink: some gossiping people declare that she is his daughter. It's true enough; it beats all to nothing the story in ancient history of the woman who suckled her papa in limbo, like a baby. Our young Pensioner is much more striking; she nourishes her papa with wine, her modesty and innocence not permitting her to suckle him.





"Gracious Heaven! what do I behold? The triumph of surgery! The Pensioner with the silver head. It is the celebrated grenadier who had his head carried off by a cannon ball, at the very moment he was thanking his Emperor, who had given him the Cross of the Legion of Honour, for an act of courage and valour. A subscription was made in his favour at the benefit of the Poles, which is the reason that his means enable him to stick a silver head of such enormous expense upon his shoulders.

"What can be the matter with this fellow, who is running like a perfect madman? Where are you going, Sir? in the name of wonder, if you don't look out, you'll break your nose. What nonsense! this warrior has got no nose; he's going to hide himself in his room under pretence of being ill, to escape the inspection: he is dreadfully afraid lest any inquiries should be made about his nose; he is just come from putting it in pawn at the Mont de Piété.



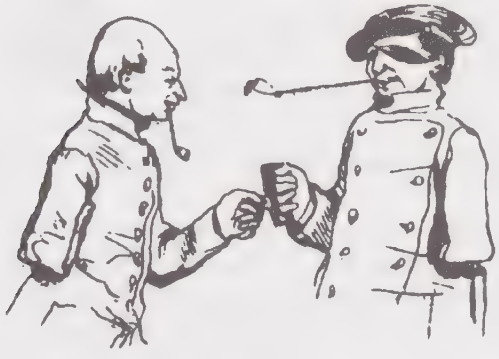
"In the name of Heaven, separate them, separate them! They have been beating each other to death: they have just been quarrelling, and both of them are in the right. It is the one who has no arm, that has given the one who has no leg a severe box on the ear, because the one who has no leg had given him a violent kick in a part of his person that was not, by any means, made of silver.



"Ah! here's the sentinel, who is holding a lance in his hand;—not so, not so,—the lance is held by an iron hook, which does duty for all the phalanges natural to man.

"Attention! here's a new picture. Here are two fellows, who, although but with one arm each, are by no means one-handed lads when it comes to filling themselves a pipe; you see one hand holds the steel, and the other the flint.

"Ah! here's a fellow who appears to be in a hobble: he was fishing with a line on the edge of the water, and had taken off his wooden legs, which are travelling down the stream like little pleasure boats. Luckily for him, a companion of his who has just finished washing his snuffy pocket-handkerchief, stops the progress of his





old friend's wooden legs with his walking-stick, which, as he had established himself washerwoman in an old broken-down punt, he manages to accomplish without great difficulty.

"Where, in the name of goodness, are these fellows going, with their sleeves on like the public scriveners, so as not to dirty themselves? Oh! they are going to fire off the handsome cannons that are above, by the borders of the moat of the Hôtel. It is a fête day,—military fête day. Oh, if you knew how happy the old boys are when listening to the noise of the cannons! One reads in their faces the warlike recollections of the troubled times of the Empire. Behind the cannonaders you see several other pensioners, who are making all sorts of circles in the dust with their canes.



"They have finished firing off the cannon, and they are having a snug little game at bowls and skittles. Gracious Heavens! Look, look! There's one fellow on his back: see, he's laughing ready to split his sides: what the deuce is he saying? It was the ball that mistook his pins for the nine-pins. Ha! ha! ha! he'll never leave off laughing.

"It is night-time; there's one fellow going to bed, he is putting an ancient pair of spectacles, with only one glass to them, on his nose. See, he is reading over again the reports in the Moniteur of the movements of the Grand Army. He looks



as if he had a tremendous inclination to sleep; he is yawning and stretching out his legs and arms for all the world as naturally as if he had them all; he is placing his head upon his pillow. Hallo! he has forgotten to put out his candle. What's he doing there?—he is scratching his nose—no, he is only taking off his spectacles. Well, that *is* a pretty go; if he hasn't positively taken off his nose, and put the candle out with it! A silver extinguisher, my eye!—what do you think of that for style, eh? There, now he's asleep. Pleasant dreams.



"Look, here's another one without arms, who has a knack of folding them on his breast, in order to resemble more strikingly his Emperor.

"And this other fellow, where is he going? Ah! he is blind, but yet he walks as well as if he had the perfect use of his sight. What a thing custom is, after all. He is going to stand treat to his comrades. What, then, is he richer than they are? Yes, certainly, for as he hasn't the slightest occasion for his allowance of candles, he sinks it in small glasses of brandy.

"What,—what, in the name of patience, is this? Where's this one-armed fellow going with his flint and steel?—See, he is going out of the Hôtel. Ah! he's on guard at the corner of the fire, in a watch-box, like the check-taker's at a theatre: he's fairly in for a night of it in the destruction way, and he ought to know a little about that kind of business—he who has been suffering destruction all his life. He has come across another one-armed veteran, his intimate friend, his right hand, a famous counsellor when it comes to the discussion of an omelette. Counsellors, however, are seldom *forkers-out*. What a wonder! they are bidding each other good-bye: they have just got sufficient arms between them to enable them to shake hands.



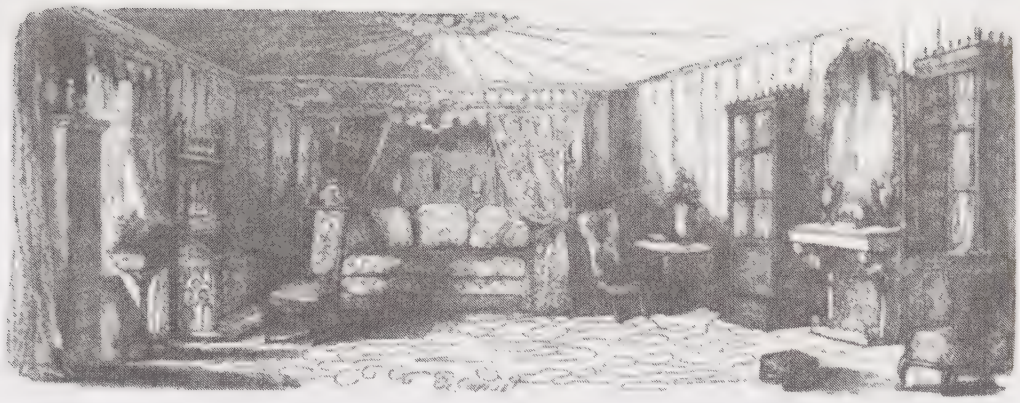
"Ah! here's Father La Joie; he is playing at hop-scotch with a number of little boys: he is standing on one foot, with his wooden leg tucked under the half of the arm that he has left.



"Well, I hope you have seen a splendid lot of cripples, who are not half such idle dogs as many that are quite whole. Honour to valour, although unfortunate, and respect to brave men, say I. There, Nini, it's all over now. Pass me over my receipt, a crust, and a drop of something. Good-bye to the company. Thank you for standing treat."



THE CARDINESS



THE CANONESS.

BY ELIAS REGNAULT.



LIFE in the Faubourg St. Germain, that living image of the eighteenth century, is as full of antiquated reminiscences as a faded beauty, as full of obstinate opinions as an elderly gentleman, and yet as full of preposterous delusions as the day-dream of a boy. The party is defeated one day—to anticipate a triumph on the next; and its hopes have already outlived a thousand disappointments. It scorns and scoffs at the obstinate resistance of events; and never has learned to call Napoleon anything but Bonaparte, or Louis Philippe anything but the Duke of Orleans. There is everlasting war between the Faubourg St. Germain and the Chaussée d'Antin,—the representatives of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Sarcasm and contempt, jests and sneers, are the inevitable fate of those wealthier cits who are fools enough to affect to ape what they have so recently defeated. Trusting in the future, regardless of present deceptions, the noble Faubourg has all the assurance of a beauty long without a rival, and all the malice of an exclusive saint,—a compound of faith and hope with scarce a grain of charity. Nevertheless, the opposition of the Faubourg St. Germain always displays a good deal of tact. It never attempts, like our parliamentary declaimers, to attack the enemy on his own ground, or to encounter the questions which he has brought forward. To discuss an opinion is to acknowledge its existence. The Faubourg St. Germain is

ever on its guard against committing itself thus: its opposition is always negative. When France ran mad with the military glory of the Empire, the Faubourg St. Germain extolled the enjoyments of peace. During the Restoration, the Chaussée d'Antin waxed liberal, and the Faubourg St. Germain preached absolutism. Now-a-days, the Chaussée d'Antin is sceptical and irreligious, whilst the Faubourg St. Germain has deviated from the principles of the eighteenth century into devotion. Its standard of religion is founded not so much on its own faith as its adversary's infidelity; and its pinnacle of virtue is simply the antipodes of the virtues of their hostile neighbours.

Having once assumed this character, the Faubourg St. Germain never gives ground, happen what may. It increases the numbers of its convents, stimulates the zeal of its missionaries, and recruits the holy army of the faith of either sex and every colour: black friars and grey, white penitents and brothers of St. Joseph, Sisters of Mercy, Franciscans, and Dominicans, till that part of the town becomes the focus of Catholicism. St. Thomas d'Aquin is its metropolitan church, the hall of its councils is at the Abbaye aux Bois, the seminary of the neophytes at the Sacré Cœur, and the superannuated veterans may drop into their graves at St. Valère.

One of the most curious results to which this rigorous determination to run counter to the whole spirit of the age has given birth, is, without doubt, that variety of the monastic species which is known by the name of The Canoness.

The Canoness is a lady of a certain age,—a nun without a convent, in the station of a married woman without a husband, with the rank of a countess without being noble. To acquire these valuable privileges, nothing is needed but to send three or four thousand francs to Saxony, Bavaria, the Rhenish provinces, or some of the minor Catholic potentates of Germany, which purchase a seat in some Teutonic chapter, whose existence is in fact nominal, but which is some how or other appended to one of the sixty budgets in which the sixty constitutions of Germany rejoice. Such are the slender remains of all that the feudal system won from ecclesiastical wealth,—such the last shred of that spiritual power of the Empire, which gave rise to the mighty controversy and the bloody quarrel of investiture.

The genus Canoness is divided into several kinds. The first is composed of poor young ladies of quality, who sacrifice their little property in order to be called "Madame," without marrying beneath them. They lead a life with nothing to colour or to embellish it—a life of sluggish virtue and frigid mediocrity. The second kind is also highly connected, but they belong to the class of emancipated ladies, who only want a privilege to sanction their liberty. They are an arrogant race, with a sprinkling of philosophy, which makes them laugh at the prejudices of caste, and still more at the prejudices of women. They have no great fortune, but they have wit enough to occupy a brilliant position; and they are perfect mistresses of the art of tickling the vanity of opulent foreigners, who are enchanted to be on visiting terms, as soon as they have set foot in France, with a descendant, in the direct line, of Anne of Brittany, or King Réné. The third, and the most curious class, is composed of wealthy damsels of low extraction, who are happy to conceal their birth under a title, and the misfortunes of their youth under the style matrimonial. It is to these ladies that we propose to call your attention.

No sooner has she got her diploma, than the Canoness sets up in the Faubourg St. Germain: any where else her whole life would be a jest. But there she has a career of her own before her; she forms a distinct class in society: she is neither maid, nor wife, nor widow—some people are so mischievous as to hint that she is all three at once.

She is not a woman of quality, for her pedigree is a blank: nor of low life, for she is a countess. She does not belong to the temporal world, for she is wedded to the spouse of the Church: nor to the spiritual world, for she retains all the freedom, the enjoyments, and the amusements of society. She has taken the veil, but she does not wear it; she has an oratory, but she does not pray there; she has a confessor, but I don't know that she repents: she may have a lover, and she will not give him up.

Her life is a figment, as well as her title, her celibacy, and her convent: it is a life without consistency and without ties. The consequence is,—as even an anomaly has its inevitable consequences,—that she is the victim of her state of social insubordination: her manners are equivocal, her address is not frank, her life is fraught with contradictions. The women who pique themselves on their strictness will not visit her, because her manners are too lax: those who have no strictness, all protest that she is a prude. The saints compare her to a priest stripped of his gown: the sceptical quiz her for canonicals. One part reject her *although* she is of the Church; another, *because* she belongs to it: on every side she suffers for the sins of her twofold character.

The tribulations of the Canoness have taught us how wretched an hermaphrodite would be, if there were such a being. Despised by the men for being a man, and hated by the women for being a woman, it would possess neither the male beauty of the former, nor the delicacy and grace of the latter. It would sigh but for half the enjoyment it might give or receive—and that half it could not derive, even from the division of itself. At once a lover and to be loved, it would find none to love, and none to love it. Oppressed with a double power and a double craving, tortured by impotence in redundancy, it would curse the Fates which gave it more than to any other being, whilst they forbade the use of what they gave.

The Canoness lost her mother at an early age: this loss will, in a great measure, explain her eccentric position, and her unmarried state, several other circumstances which preceded, and, perhaps, were the very motives of her joining the Sisterhood. Her father, a plain, simple, good sort of a man, has passed his whole life in labouring to amass the wealth which she devotes to her own purposes: he, avoiding the gay world his daughter seeks, and fortifying himself in his solitude against those brilliant assemblies so eagerly attended, so fondly cherished, by her. You may sometimes perceive a frown steal over the old man's countenance, but no reproach ever escapes his lips: perhaps he scorns to utter a harsh word; perhaps he has already experienced its inutility. Thus, deprived of her mother by death, separated from her father by her manner of living, the Canoness is almost an orphan. Nevertheless, she has a neighbour and companion, in the form of a little girl, fondled, caressed, spoiled to the last degree, who calls her "Auntee." This brat is, in her eyes, so charming and adorable, but, to every one else, so odious and

detestable, that it is difficult to explain so much disinterested affection by any collateral relationship. The child's mother is never spoken of; and though the being is hardly six years old, her parents are clean forgotten. The father, indeed, is sometimes hinted at; in one of these moments of feigned indifference, when women seem to let things drop out by accident, the Canoness will tell you that her niece is the daughter of a Russian prince: she takes good care not to throw an air of mystery over this communication; indeed, the more importance she attaches to it, the less she chooses to let it appear. To say the truth, she cares but little for your conjectures, provided you will only conjecture that her admirers have been people of quality: with a prince, there is no such thing as ruin—the proper term is "a conquest." As she has no principles of virtue that are not principles of vanity, she would not refuse to play the part of Europa, Alcmena, or Danae with Jupiter, but she would reject the charms of Venus, if they were to unite her to Vulcan the Blacksmith. Still, I am free to confess, that before I heard that story of the Russian Prince, I had not penetrated into the lowest depths of female vanity.

The dress of the Canoness is in accordance with the rest of her life, that is as much as to say, it is discordant with everything about her. In the general effect of her dress, she is for ever behind the fashions; in the minutiæ, she will have the last new whim. Her cap sprang into creation but yesterday: she will have the newest collar, the most modern scarf, but her gowns are cut on last year's patterns. Who can relate the decided part she took in the great contest of full and tight sleeves? —how she clung to the caps of last season, and still resists the introduction of lappets? But in all other respects, except these scraps of things, as she calls them, she affects great serenity of costume, and as the symbol of that dignified simplicity she selects and sticks to the dress of black satin. It is true that black satin dresses are got down to the very kennel, but the Canoness adheres to them. The rest of her person will infallibly protect her from misapprehension.

When we go into the boudoir of the Canoness, the very same contrast will continue to strike us. On the chimney, the Lamb without spot or blemish, chiselled in alabaster, lies between two Etruscan vases, adorned with satyrs and fauns. A gothic kneeling-chair corresponds to a gay willow litter-basket; and Pradier's little statuettes are the pendant to some cherubims of the twelfth century. At the bottom of the alcove, which is veiled by the rich folds of the silken drapery, there is a heavy crucifix; on one side is the shell for holy water; on the other, an image of the immaculate Virgin; and beneath them a downy divan, which may suggest notions of a different character. On each side of the chimney is placed an elegant citron-wood bookcase, closed with plate-glass windows, lined with light-blue silk. The one is always open, and you may see the rich bindings and splendid chasings of the books of piety and prayer that it contains: the other is shut, and conceals its treasures from the casual visitor. The intimate friends of the Canoness assert that it contains a complete set of the works of George Sand and Balzac. Evil-minded people go so far as to mention the younger Crebillon.

From the moment when her entrance into the sisterhood makes the Canoness mistress of herself, she sees a good deal of company, receives them with considerable splendour, and is perfectly aware that a good cook is a most powerful means of attraction. Nothing is wanting to the solid part of her dinners; but the

finer element, the wine, is detestable. To have a good cellar, you must have a master of the house; but the father of the Canoness, good man! abdicated long ago, and only appears as a make-up guest at her table. Upon the whole, her dinners are entertaining, the men in good spirits, and the women very well adapted to satisfy a moderate taste; for the mistress of the house dreads nothing more than superiors of her own sex. The consequence is, that she has frequently to change her female guests: the humblest toady will not be always satisfied with a subordinate part, and if she is born to be a slave, she had rather be the slave of a man, because that kind of slavery has its advantages. If a coquette of any degree of merit finds her way to the rooms of the Canoness, she will soon find her way out again without its being shown her. Two coquettes understand each other so well, that they never can live upon terms: one cannot dupe the other; and the friend of a coquette must be her dupe.

In this respect the Canoness is peculiarly fortunate: she has a friend—a friend who is young, and would even be good-looking if there were any expression in her countenance. But that dull eye never sparkled with love or hatred; that smooth brow was never ruffled by a passion; those coral lips were never unclosed but to give utterance to a common-place remark, or a lifeless smile. Amelia is one of those young women who act to perfection as the auxiliaries of coquettes, without ever becoming formidable as rivals. The Canoness uses her to the best possible advantage. With Amelia she can go on a round of adventures; with Amelia to the masked ball; with Amelia to mass. If she wishes to put a piece of scandal into circulation, it will be through Amelia's mouth: if she has a broad remark to venture on, Amelia will give it utterance with all the innocence of a convent parrot: if she meditates a conquest, Amelia will open the trenches. Amelia says what the Canoness thinks: what Amelia says the Canoness will do. Amelia must have a strong dose of childish gaiety to be always playing with edge-tools in the most equivocal positions; but she laughs at sighing admirers, and pushes the chosen one into the boudoir without a thought. In a word, Amelia is the mainspring of all these intrigues; and, like all mechanical springs, she unconsciously obeys the impulse which is given her.

By the side of the friend, figures on all occasions an eternal little busy-body, who every time the mistress of the house speaks to him never fails to give her the title she has bought — "Indeed, my Lady Countess — Yes, my Lady Countess — No, my Lady Countess — Oh! my Lady Countess." He is the speaking-trumpet of her rank, to call every body's attention to the homage due to the presiding genius of the place. You observe him hovering about her, whispering in her ear, scolding the servants, and doing the honours with extravagant rigour: and when you ask who he is, you are informed that he is the complaisant bearer of private and confidential letters; the officious agent in all mysterious negotiations; the chief secretary to the diplomacy of the cloister.

In spite of all the airs of grandeur which upstarts will assume, there is always some flaw in their manners to betray the blemish of their origin. A shopkeeper may buy a country seat and a title; he may be surrounded by excellent friends, his very humble servants; but just as he assumes a dignified attitude proper for his rank, a false move exposes his native infirmities. The citizen-king will always be

more a citizen than a king. Nothing engages the Canoness more than this constant battle with her own early recollections; this attempt to foil and forget her past life. As far as the surface goes, she succeeds pretty well; but in the inner recesses of the heart some impressions remain which it is less easy to efface; and she has a bump on her forehead which she inherits from the craniological system of the family. Her hereditary vice is a vulgar passion for the Stock-Exchange. Every day her stock-broker is closetted with her, to calculate the rival influences of Bulls and Bears. It has been suspected that conferences of so secret a nature might conceal other mysteries than those of the three per cents. The coquette cared but little for the report, because such scandal only told in her favour: the passion which was attributed to her heart served to disguise the passion of avarice which corroded her mind. Nevertheless, we are informed by the best authority that the stock-broker came and went for no other purpose in life but the movement of her Ladyship's stocks, and we would fain believe it.

In the first days of her titular distinctions, the Canoness was fastidious, and would let none but names of distinction cross her threshold: but the people of quality were as fastidious as herself, and turned up their noses at her invitations. She soon knew what to do: coquettes have always a sort of bastard pride which protects them from insult, by preventing them from feeling it; and she lost no time in filling up the places of her supercilious neighbours with artists, men of letters, and men of leisure, who acknowledged her hospitality by the deference they paid to her person. Surrounded by this jovial circle of independent guests, the Canoness presides at her table, with sufficient grace to give conversation the spur, and sufficient ease to let wits wander at their will. The stores of her coquetry are all opened at table: she invites the appetite of the gourmand; she whispers sentiment to the poet; and she talks of the march of intellect to the philosophical radical: she has something agreeable for every one about her, without omitting a slight fillip of devotion, which goes straight to the ears of the chaplain, without being stopped on the way by the sceptics, who are all engaged in the culinary rites of that temple where Vatel was a priest. At no period of her existence does the coquette more completely dissemble the vulgar cravings of nature: a syllabub, an orange jelly, or a spunge biscuit, form the basis of her meal, and even these light comestibles are swallowed in fragments so small, and at moments so adroitly chosen, that the majority of her guests are convinced she lives upon air. The Canoness protests that she subsists on spiritual food, and the careless are amused by a system of privation which is intended to put upon them a slight delusion. It is true, that in the evening, and in her own room, the Canoness makes amends for the abstemious rigour of her coquetry, by a substantial repast; but the men who amuse themselves by making a poetic idol of such women, are more apt to applaud her for dissimulation as a tribute to themselves, than to censure it as an absurdity in her conduct.

Among these gentlemen, it cannot be supposed but that the Canoness has one or more favourites. She has that Christian precept by heart, "She hath loved much, and much shall be forgiven her:" and she is too well versed in feminine privileges not to have, at least for show, two or three admirers. The number is generally limited to three; one by choice, a common sort of man, whom she loves, and who bullies her; a second for vanity, some poet who adores her, and whom she rules

with a rod of iron; a third for fashion's sake, a man of the world, whom she thinks she can cajole, and who makes love for sheer diversion. She is fond with the first, prudish with the second, coquettish with the third: and yet her three caprices would not make up the tenderness of one woman's honest love.

All this easy independence and complete freedom of life, however, belong to the early years of the religious profession of the Canoness. Somewhat later she adopts her part to the costume she wears, and assumes the language of a saint; but this metamorphosis does not take place without a gradual and well-prepared transition. A disappointment first makes her turn up her eyes to heaven: the desertion of a lover throws her on her knees; and the decline of her charms reminds her of a future state. She consults her mirror day after day, to learn whether she is still to cling to the world, or wholly to turn to Heaven. The slightest wrinkle on her brow will provoke a sigh for her transgressions; a strange mark on the cheek will rekindle the fervour of her piety; a grey hair would cast her prostrate at the foot of the altar. The workings of grace are indubitably effective.

Certain changes then take place in the people about her, and in the general aspect of the house. The gay young gentlemen of yesterday find that their jokes are now too loud; and, one after another, they disappear. Amelia becomes more shrewd, and more retired; the maitre-d'hotel looks extremely grave; and the femme-de-chambre grows reserved. It often happens that in the morning hours which the Canoness devotes in her boudoir to dress and devotion, a begging-nun steals across the dining-rooms to win a trifle for her convent from this new child of grace; for, in the religious world, news flies fast.

But the Devil still occupies the position; he retains, by a thousand cherished enjoyments and agreeable enticements, the mastery of the heart: the surface, indeed, is made over to Heaven; but there is a balance of power.

This sort of compromise between the church and the world makes the position of the Canoness still more equivocal. One morning (it was Shrove Monday), she was lolling on her couch, and discussing with Amelia the preparations for a masked ball, to which the two friends were to go incog. that very evening.—"Good Heavens," cried the Canoness, "there's eleven o'clock striking, and Madame Leroy promised me my dress before ten. Take your pen, my dear, there's not an instant to lose." Amelia sits down to the sofa-table to pen the important despatch, upon which the pleasures of the evening depend. At the same moment the door opens, and a shrill voice is heard to exclaim, "Heaven preserve your Ladyship!"

THE CANONESS.—Ah! 'tis you, Sister Thérèse; how are our dear sister Ursulines, and our worthy Abbess. (*Aside to* AMELIA).—Make haste, my dear, with the note.

SISTER THERESE.—Your Ladyship does us too much honour; all our dear flock is quite well; we have only to deplore

THE CANONESS.—I understand you; the world is grown so wicked that the flame of charity, the first of Christian virtues, has become extinct. (*Aside to* AMELIA).—Be sure you tell her how to trim the body with Brussels point.—Sister, the fewer charitable souls there are, the harder is the task of those that remain.

SISTER THERESE.—Ah! my Lady! the precepts of the Gospel seem to be forgotten; knock where we will, no one opens; seek where we will, we do not find.

THE CANONESS.—Indeed, Sister, we live in cruel times. (*Aside to* AMELIA).—'Tis a dress for a Queen of Love and Beauty.—We must submit to the will of Providence.—The stomacher in cloth of gold.—Better days will come: truth will prevail.—A train, my dear.—And our Holy Mother Church will regain all her splendour.—Low on the shoulders, you know.

SISTER THERESE.—Heaven grant what your Ladyship says may come true!

THE CANONESS.—Gustavus must be of the party.—But, my Sister, I shall not confine myself to mere expressions of sympathy.—You can bring him with you.—I will do what I can.—How angry the Marchioness will be.—I can give but little.—Don't let it seem as if we gave him a rendezvous, for the world.—But that little I give with all my heart.

The Canoness gets up, draws on a silken slipper, and gives her purse with its slender contents to Sister Thérèse, who makes her bow and retires in all humility, whilst the two friends finish their epistle.

A few months elapse after this scene, and, for the first time in her life, the Canoness falls really and desperately in love—in love with one who is ruthlessly laid hold of by a fairer, a younger, and a richer rival. Then, indeed, her spite drives her outright into extreme devotion. She takes a younger confessor, and keeps him for the rest of her life. She consults him every hour of the day; she learns from him the sweets of repentance, and sheds in his bosom her penitential sighs. Closetted together the whole of the day, they spend their time in ascetic meditations; they mingle their prayers; and the converted Canoness lives but for faith in the one Church. The days of the dinner parties and the supper parties are fled for ever. The stock-broker is seen no more. Amelia is dismissed. No one remains but the Confessor—sole arbiter of her spiritual and temporal affairs. His sacred jealousy keeps the profane aloof; his pastoral care shuts up the lamb in the fold, lest it stray. Who can describe the holy grief of that afflicted heart? the pious ecstacy, the scalding tears, the cruel self-mortification of this Samaritan? Who can penetrate into the mysteries of the oratory, where the two souls are interfused by the intensity of their penitence, and the enchanting joys of spiritual consolation?

The atmosphere of Paris is too impure for the converted sinner: the noise of the world she once loved so well may still reach her ear. The Confessor orders her to make a pilgrimage to Rome, and the Canoness goes, like another Magdalen, to fall at the feet of His Holiness the Pope. Escorted by her spiritual guide, watched by him, protected by him, she has the buckler of the faith always girt about her. In this guise she will visit half the convents in Italy, and edify the sisterhood by the vehemence of her contrition. Doubtless she will end her days in one of those calm and holy havens—unless she meet some unhappy German prince, some lost sheep of the flock of Cobourg, who will consent to exchange his illustrious name for her fortune. That would be to end as she would fain have begun.



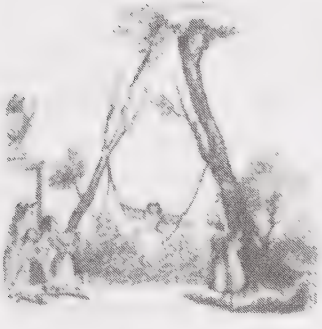
THE TEACHER OF THE BOARDING-SCHOOL.



THE COUNTRY SCHOOL FOR YOUNG LADIES.

BY ECARNOT.

Rien n'est plus négligé que l'éducation des filles; la coutume et le caprice des mères y décident souvent de tout.—FENELON.



FTER the prosy speeches of the mayor, and the orchestra of a country playhouse, the most laughable thing in the world is a Young Ladies' Boarding School. We will suppose a town containing from five to ten thousand inhabitants, long and narrow, with a White-hart hotel and reading-rooms, a commissary of police, game-keepers, lamps that give no light, streets half pavement half mud, a municipal drummer, and the usual quantum of female gossips and scandalmongers: these last purveying for the edification of the parents, as the Boarding School does for that of the children; murdering reputations with the story of the day, as the Boarding School tortures the ears with Le Ragois' history of France; destroying confidence in the dearest of friends, as the school destroys the happiest dispositions with its system of instruction. Just inform us about the battle of Tolbiac; in what year was it fought? Come.

And when the little girls know about the battle of Tolbiac, and in what year it was fought, and a great many other equally interesting facts, they return to their village. Well, it is really wonderful!

Not that they do not learn other things than these. On the contrary, education at the present day has the arms of a giant, and embraces everything; no matter the rank, the fortune, or the natural intelligence of the pupil,—everybody is taught

everything: the daughter of the pastry-cook is taught literary composition; the labourer's daughter, logical analysis; the shoemaker's daughter, astronomy; the tanner's daughter, the art of poetry. Over and above all this, in order to form economical, sensible, and useful housewives, they have the toilette of Venus after her birth, and the fancies of Vulcan after his marriage; the functions of Mercury the messenger, and of Ganymede the cup-bearer of the Gods; and the countless *decencies* of the heathen mythology. There are the dog of Alcibiades, and the she-wolf of Romulus; the moral story of Lucretia under the Tarquins; the gladiators publicly rubbed with oil; lectures on love in cuirass and helmet; the secret initiations of the priests of antiquity, and the monkish austerities of modern pontiffs; and all this because, they tell us, history, when written with truth and simplicity, tends to enlarge both the heart and the understanding of youth.—Much good may it do your wives!

To endeavour to furnish children with principles of order, economy, and management, in these establishments, no one dreams;—to prepare and predispose them to become amiable and cheerful mothers of families; enlightened, attached, and devoted companions; indulgent and disinterested friends, no one attempts;—to eradicate all germs of meanness, selfishness, and falsehood, which cause them to grow up narrow-minded, meddling, story-telling, quarrelsome creatures, still less;—to develope and foster, when they happen to exist, high, noble, and generous ideas, which might preserve them from envy, hatred, malice, and all the hideous leprosy of the heart,—nonsense;—b-a, ba; b-e, be; b-i, bi; b-u, bu; the participle agrees with the rule, when the rule is before the verb;—in six days, God created the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh day;—the sons of Charlemagne were named John, Peter, Paul, and Louis;—the Fox and the Crow, a fable;—a hundred eggs at a hundred sous, what is that a dozen?—hold yourself up, miss; and . . .—that's all.

All this costs about three hundred and eighty francs a year, exclusive of bedding, towels, &c., seats at church, accomplishment-masters, and broken windows.—By the by, here is a history of broken windows,—it is but a short one.

When I was living in the country, I was requested to pay for the schooling of the daughter of one of my friends, who was obliged to preserve a strict incognito, from some motive quite foreign to the present story. The child was of a mildness quite angelic, and afforded her anonymous parent all the joy and satisfaction he could desire, with the exception of one particular. The quarterly account always presented a supplementary item of from eight to ten broken windows. This was extraordinary,—at least it appeared to me very extraordinary. I went to the mistress, hat in hand, and expressed my astonishment. Having seated ourselves opposite each other, "Sir," said she, "I have thirty sous worth of windows broken every month; every body tells me that it is Miss Hortense who does it,—therefore, it must be she;" upon which I retired, ruminating upon——hammer and block.

This, however, is seen in the hours of recreation and walking, both in schools and the world. The hammer holding himself proudly up, and talking both loud and fast, fixing the different amusements, and changing them as he pleases, settling the bridle, and never hesitating to make use of the whip, hurrying to and fro, shouting, pushing, and jostling, but after all a good-hearted fellow at bottom. You

have doubtless seen him often. It is he who makes a noise in school time, and then declares that it is Josephine. It is he who hides all the pens and pretends to look for them, muttering all the while, "It is impossible to do anything here." It is he who gets up in the night time and mixes the shoes, does all the mischief, tells tales, repeats anecdotes, and performs practical jokes, shouts, runs, elbows, tumbles down himself and upsets every body else, while the poor block humbly bends his back, cries in a corner, copies out pages, and pays for the broken windows. Deny it if you can.

You will see, during the hours of recreation in these establishments, a small group giggling very mysteriously: these are the great girls. When the mistress makes her appearance, they either disperse or laugh out loud. They have either a secret or a lover,—it is such capital fun, and then it vexes the Teacher, especially if she does not happen to have one herself. The correspondence is carried on in common, and signed, "Your affectionate and faithful friend till death." They see the favoured one either at the gate of the school, when they are out walking, at church, or in their dreams. While one is writing to him, the other is on the watch. They generally conceal the letters in their stockings, and the lock of the loved one's hair in one of their shoes. It prevents the time from hanging heavy on their hands. Depend upon it, when a girl of seventeen years of age is content to remain at school, it is a certain sign that it is no longer a proper place for her.

And how should it be otherwise? Subtract love and marriage from literature, and what remains?—banish them from mythology, and what will you have left? Every thing is included in them; they are, as it were, universal life. And tell me, if you can, the exact line of demarcation that separates the heart of a girl from that of a woman. Clothed in mystery, yet betrayed on every side, the secret declares and reveals itself, in defiance of all vain attempts at concealment. Instead of describing life as it really is, abounding in devotion and sacrifices, they deliver it over to the imagination overflowing with honey and crowned with roses; and when the too ardent mind of youth withers and wastes away, and a too precocious maturity arrives, then, and not till then, the second, and alas! the true knowledge of life is attained.

To follow out the precept and furnish an example;—the school-mistress is young, and gets married. Increase and multiply, is the evangelical advice; and intellectual development being the end and aim of education, as marriage is that of nature, it singularly advances the ideas of young people. It is as well to know while we are young, what we are to expect.

Generally speaking, the school-mistress marries an usher, of tolerably good appearance, or a non-spectacled professor of classics. It is he who undertakes the first class, and teaches arithmetic. When the big girls are very big, and the professor in good health, the Mistress is generally present at the lessons. It prevents inattention, and doubles the superintendence. Girls are inquisitive, and mathematicians abstracted,—at least they say so; and young married women are not fond of abstraction. "Take four from four, nothing remains; now have the goodness, miss, to look at your tables."

Very often the School-mistress has studied either English or Italian; very rarely French, of which she makes the same use as the "Bourgeois Gentilhomme" does of

prose. That is the talent of it. To teach what one knows is difficult; to teach that of which one knows nothing, is pretty: hence it happens that the French, the queen of living languages, is spoken in the provinces with that delicacy of inflection, purity of tone, and softness of pronunciation, which metamorphoses it into Russian, Flemish, Celtic, Ostrogothic, or, indeed, anything that you please.

Do not, for a moment, suppose that people, either from taste or choice, devote themselves freely and deliberately to education. Do not imagine, that the sacred task of instruction,—the basis of the social structure,— has either been understood, or even considered; that the accomplishment of so arduous a task has been diffidently assumed, and firmly persevered in; that by long and profound study, the parties have qualified themselves to hold in their hands the future honour, happiness, and respectability of families. Nothing of the kind. It is only when the grocery or linendrapery business has failed, or agricultural affairs have been unsuccessful, that a school is immediately established. It's all very natural. Will you take a prospectus?

Some one has remarked that two-thirds of the Boarding Schools for Young Ladies are kept by reduced families. It is a sort of privy council*, of an honourable description,—a kind of a b c d-arian peerage. Consequently, the school-mistress never fails to be dressed in the ultra fashion. She proceeds to market with a Cashmere, to church in a hat and feathers, to the promenade with a parasol; she has white hands, well-cut nails, hair in braids, and a largish figure. Her servant wears a white apron with pockets, and wooden shoes, which she deposits at the door of the drawing-room.

In the event of any visits, the children are delighted. "Well, I do declare, it's Felicie's mamma; where did she buy her dress?" "She must be going to take Felicie away, and place her at a large school in Paris. I should like to go to Paris myself, just to see it." "Nonsense, you don't suppose that they have the means." "Well, papa has promised to take me there in the holidays, if I get a prize." And when the visit is ended, they get up and make their courtesy as pertly as possible. Good manners are certain tests of a good education.

This is also the reason why music is taught at the Boarding School,—the piano, the guitar, and singing. Fifteen minutes every other day, and the grand piece before the parents. In a general way, the music-master of the district, a tall, dark, thin figure of a man, somewhat facetious, and a capital fellow in company, gives lessons on the piano; he is an excellent clarionet and bass-fiddle player; a good hand at billiards, and such-like games; taking snuff, however, and prodigious quantities of it. He imparts to his pupils facility in fingering, simplicity in the movements, and the graceful ease of the position,—for this reason, the professor at ten francs a lesson



* Retired Secretaries of State in France, were, previously to 1830, admitted to a seat in the Privy Council, with a salary.

dances his hands about, jumps his elbows, and distorts his dorsal column at the risk of breaking it. He likewise inculcates the proper value of time, the harmony of the passages, the magic of the effects, and the sympathy of animation; this accounts for the little witches playing flat, counting incorrectly, murdering one's ears, and sending one to sleep.

Add to this, that the unfortunate beings, executioners and victims, have lost not only the days of their youth, but the money of their parents, without pleasure or profit. Music, as an accomplishment, is a pest,—as an amusement, a jewel. Only suppose a woman, seated at her piano, with four squalling brats, her husband out of temper, her cook robbing her, her linen and plate disappearing. Can you even, with the aid of a microscope, find the proper place of C natural in such a hurly-burly as this, which is miscalled an establishment—a family—a household?

There are many good respectable mothers of families, living in the fear of God and the hatred of sin, possessed, moreover, of some good common sense, who, notwithstanding, imagine that the sum-total of a good education consists in music. There are not a few of these. They are not aware—good, worthy old souls—that the cultivation of notes hastens, and singularly hastens too, the physical developement. There is something so sympathetic in the harmony of sounds, which fills the heart with feelings of melancholy, and causes it to unburden itself. The notes, the instruments, the voices blend, or, as it were, *marry* together; and the heart seeks to imitate them. The long hours passed at the piano are devoted partly to study, partly to meditation—a meditation, indeed, of the future. The vibration of the strings is *felt* long after it has ceased to be audible to the ear; and the soft language of approbation, the tender tones of flattery, soften and penetrate the breasts of the most guileless and innocent. The key of G opens the door of the heart; the piano is the hot-bed of love. Close the doors, tender mothers, and look to the windows.

After the music, comes the dancing and the drawing, the drilling and the uniform,—farces that take wondrously well with the world at large. The dancing-master is, however, a being *sui generis*, unknown to Buffon, and undescribed by Balzac. A pair of pumps, a kit, and an *avant deux*, and you have the man. Uttering, at a certain hour, the identical words, and repeating the airs of the day before. "Now ladies, in your places, if you please. I am going to play you a new tune. Make your courtesies, &c." He comes with a laugh, and departs with a smile. He has just been walking seven miles; and is now going to proceed seven miles farther, to give a lesson for thirty sous. Cultivate the fine arts, and try to make a living by them,—do.



The refectory and the dormitory,—the keeping-in after school hours and the dunce's cap,—the punishment-task that teaches nothing, and the distribution of prizes that shows that nothing worth mentioning has been taught, still remain to be noticed. This last is a charming little recreation, interspersed with farcical

ceremonies, diabolical music, critical whisperings, and laurel crowns which fall over the nose. Then the pride, pomp, and circumstance of the Boarding-school are to be found in their greatest glory. Then are to be seen the farmer's wife in her green bonnet, the fine lady in her aristocratic mantilla, the committee of instruction in black coats, the curate in his robes, and the mayor in his scarf. There you see Buffon, Bouilli, and La Fontaine, respectively bound in grey, blue, and yellow morocco. You see, in fact, everything but that which you would be most delighted to witness,—modest, reserved, diffident children.

Over and above all this, there is the Teacher. The Teacher is the corner stone of the building,—at once the base and the summit of the Boarding-school. She occupies the middle rank between the pupil whom she scolds, and the mistress whom she toadies. Invisible and unknown in the first period of her life, she bursts suddenly into existence in the second, and disappears as suddenly in the third. Child of chance or necessity, she leaves the stage-coach at twelve o'clock, and enters upon her functions in the lower school-room at three. Her luggage consists of a trunk, a pasteboard box, and Strasburg shoes; her stock of literature is not by any means so ponderous; her name is Emily, Jenny, or Lucy,—never anything else.

At school until her eighteenth year, the Teacher has just lost her father or her fortune, not unfrequently both. She writes an English hand, can manage to pick out a sonata on the piano-forte, and ties the ribbons of her bonnet close under her chin. In company—for she goes into company—she is reserved, talks upon literature or domestic matters, soaks her biscuit in water, and rumples her napkin; she speaks thick, but seldom.

When the School-mistress is paying a visit or at market, the Teacher talks very loudly, scolds the housemaids, dresses her hair in the drawing-room, receives the parents, and makes the report. She expatiates upon the progress of the child, falls into raptures of admiration at its extraordinary abilities, explains the system of instruction, and predicts crowns and prizes. "Education here," she says, "is conducted in playing." Then she cries out, through the door, "Be so good, ladies, as to hold your tongues, will you.—Noise," she continues, "quite kills me: solitude and the open fields,—there are my affections." The mamma is the wife of a farmer who owns eight ploughs: she jumps the child up and down upon her knee, and calls her "*her duck.*"

In school-hours, the Teacher walks up and down, speaks abruptly, her head quite back, and her foot firmly planted on the ground. She says, "Paris, department of the Seine." If any one is passing by the half-opened door, she says, in a louder tone, "Paris, what department?" and when a child answers, "In the Pas de Calais," "Good heavens!" she cries, "how stupid you are."—Her thumb and forefinger are generally bedaubed with ink.

Occasionally, the Teacher has a fixed study: she is learning English,—*Kelipso coude not bi commeforted.* Then she bends herself over her desk, casts a stern and severe look at the little girls, whom she forthwith determines to keep in, wets her thumb, turns over the leaves of her dictionary, and reclines her head upon her left hand: they call this "sapping," at college. Copying out songs is another of her occupations.

On the Thursdays, the Teacher takes the children out for a walk. Poor, pretty

little creatures! deprived of a mother's tenderness and caresses at the very age when they are rendered doubly dear, from being returned with such delightful interest; weaned from the sweet pleasures of family affection,—pleasures of so cheering a nature that no future cares or misery can efface the remembrance that they leave; rudely torn from the bosom of a mother, on which the griefs, the pains, the misfortunes, and the passions of childhood are so calmly and so successfully soothed to sleep! The Teacher takes them out, and makes them walk two by two: it looks military. Her brother is serjeant in a dragoon regiment, and plays upon the flute. This is one reason why she has a peculiar liking for the local music-master, the before-mentioned tall dark man.

Out walking, the Teacher looks serious,—it has a good effect; she walks in the rear, by the side of the very clumsiest girl in the school,—this is politic. In her left hand she carries a book, always the same one; her right hand indicates the direction. When the girls play at blind-man's-buff, she reads under the shade of an oak, an elm, or an apple-tree,—the apple-tree is classical. She looks at the passers-by, and smiles,—it does not in the least compromise her, and might lead to something. If a child is running, and happens to fall down, she says, "Served her right." If there is any one present, she takes her upon her knee, kisses her, calls her a poor, dear little angel, and says, "Never mind."—This is methodical.

On her return from the walk, to please the children, she accompanies them to a place where dancing is going forward. As for herself, she never dances: she will not be out of mourning till next month, and then the orchestra is worse than street music. She makes the girls keep closer in the ranks, looks over all the heads, bows at a distance, starts running like a mad thing, comes in last, stops at the door, and finally looks about to see whether anybody has followed her.

At church, the Teacher walks at the head of the ranks, the Mistress follows in the rear. Her superintendence is of the most active description: she turns round every minute to get a better view of her pupils. The signals for sitting down at the *Credo*, for the kneeling at the *Agnus Dei*, the contemplation of the *Lever Dieu*, and the trembling of the *Ite missa est*, all come from her seat. She hums the canticle, turns over the leaves of her illustrated mass-book once or twice, never more, and presents the holy water to the little ones.

Her in-door occupations are prodigiously numerous and important. The rising in the morning, the lessons, the play-hours, the meals, and the visits, each in its turn demands her attention. She superintends the dresses, inspects the hands, mends the pens, and distributes the copies. At table, she corrects the grace, passes the salt, crumbles her bread, counts the walnuts, and is the first to rise. She is finishing a novel.

The vacations are to the Teacher what an unexpected legacy would be to any poor, half-starved creature. An orphan, and without the smallest sign of any traceable relations until September arrives, when they spring from the earth like asparagus after rain. She discovers that she has an uncle in Dordogne, an aunt in Lorraine, a guardian at Fontainebleau, and a cousin at Paris. She is going to spend a month in Paris.

The return after the holidays produces an extraordinary influence upon the Teacher. Affable and communicative during the last fortnight, she returns stern

and ill-tempered; she neither laughs nor pardons; she must have silence and solitude, punishments and letters. "Has any one seen the postman?—has the postman been round yet?—who has seen the postman?" If there are no letters from Paris, she contracts her lips, wrinkles her forehead, and the lower class look and tremble. "Here, Ma'am, is a letter that" "Give it me, you little silly." There, now she is reading it, beaming with smiles: and, like a widow who forgets her tears in her new head-dress, the Teacher wraps herself up in her recollections, and shuts her past pleasures in her desk.

At the piano, when by chance she resigns herself to it, the Teacher is ill-tempered: she knows nothing by heart, the instrument is out of tune, and the tuner never comes to his time. If you press her, and you have passed your thirtieth year, she gives you a sly glance, and a variation of "Clair de la lune." Talk to her about arietta or ballad, Tyrolienne or barcarolle, she declares that Plantade is dull, Puget monotonous, Levassor uninteresting, and Polak positively stupifying.

Fortunately, the mother of a pupil who is in want of some necessary article of attire arrives, and the Teacher accompanies her to the dress-maker's. The dress-maker's shop is at once the Paradise and the Purgatory of the Teacher. She there does penance for all the vanities that she dares not nurture, all the desires she is unable to satisfy. There she lives, her muscles have full play, her eyes repose, her hands act; she talks about lace, overturns the boxes, forgets the child, and treats herself to a mantilla, for which she promises to pay next quarter.

On the 1st of January, she either receives a new-year's-gift or a complimentary ode. In a general way, the Teacher prefers the tangible and positive to the idealities of poetry. The latter, however, being much more economical, the father of one of the little girls, member of some unknown academy, and editor of the newspaper of the district, composes some verses; the child learns them by heart, and recites, in a pleasing manner, what follows:—

"How oft has the love we have wish'd to display
To a dearly-prized tutress and friend,
Been check'd by departure, while we as we may
With our sorrows are left to contend.

"We're but young, it is true, but we're able to feel
And appreciate kindness and love;
And for blessings upon you, whenever we kneel,
Pray to God and the Virgin above.

"For when we were naughty, you bade us repent,
Or like a fond mother have chid;
And without wicked murmur, or sad discontent,
Have taught us to do as we're bid.

"Thus we hope you will pardon this simple address,
As our feelings it seeks to convey;
For we were embolden'd for once to express
The affection we feel every day."

Hereupon the little girls cry, the Teacher cries, the servants cry too, and everybody is pleased. Reader, are you so too?



THE DEPUTY.



THE DEPUTY.

BY EUGENE BRIFFAULT.

Electeurs de ma Province,
Il faut que vous sachiez tous,
Ce que j'ai fait pour le Prince,
Pour la Patrie et pour vous.—BERANGER.



APPILY I have not to portray a political character!

I was educated with Auguste de * * *, but since leaving college we have been placed by circumstances in very different spheres of life. It has been my fate to be thrown, much against my will, in the diurnal conflict of the political press, with no other protection and fortune than my pen; while my early friend's life, free from the turmoil of politics, was quietly gliding on in his native province and the demesne of his fathers. After his classical education was completed, he had leisure to reflect perfectly at his ease how it would best suit him to enter the world. He was in no hurry, and took his time, till one day he coolly said to himself, "I should like to be a Deputy." He was then thirty-six years of age.

When I learnt his determination, I was at first surprised, and then anxious; but I soon became aware that, on account of his extensive property in the district for which he offered himself as a candidate, Auguste could command powerful interest and sufficient influence to secure his return in spite of all competitors. I accordingly looked forward to his nomination with confidence.

Auguste was elected, two years ago, Deputy for the arrondissement of * * *.

On his arrival in Paris he called upon me. He was almost afraid of what he had dared to undertake. The formidable honour, once obtained, preyed on his mind.

He was nervous and agitated, and looked up to me for advice; he seemed to be as giddy as if suddenly conveyed to the top of a lofty monument. I tried to compose him as well as I could, not daring to laugh at his terrors; for symptoms of gratified vanity shone through his fear, making it manifest that he was not a little proud of his dignity.

He frequently repeated his calls for some time after, anxious to consult with me about his line of conduct; but it was not long ere he offered me his patronage.

A complete change, certainly rapid, if not sudden, came over my friend's manners. He speedily got rid of his natural timidity, I had almost said, his modesty; and I was never more struck by the powerful effect of the elective mandate, than when I saw how quickly it enlarged the intellectual faculties of my honourable friend, his talent for observation, his foresight, and, above all, his ability as a leader. A month had not yet elapsed, and I no longer recognised in Auguste the same man I had shortly before seen so frightened by his new duties, and so anxious to discharge them creditably. Auguste had already acquired perfect self-confidence. On his first visits, he had spoken with great humility of what he wished to obtain from Government for his native district; soon afterwards, he expatiated with energy on sundry improvements required in his department. Now, the interest and happiness of France were uppermost in his thoughts, and views and projects embracing the whole world, often engrossed his mind. It is right to add, that these extended views of general politics effectually banished from his memory his pledges to forward and support the local interests of his constituents, as he used to call the elective body of his district.

Struck more and more every day by his wonderful progress, I fancied that he devoted all his leisure, after the performance of his parliamentary duties, to profound research and a course of severe study of the more important questions, thus preparing himself for political eminence—the secret object of his parliamentary ambition. In fact, his small apartment, in one of the quiet hotels of the Rue de Beaune, was littered with heaps of papers, prints, books, and pamphlets of every form and colour, at least as far as the covers went. I was lost in admiration and delight; I hardly dared to touch with profane hand these treasures of science and knowledge, which were to contribute so much to the national prosperity. After some hesitation, I ventured to take up a pamphlet—its leaves were innocent of the paper knife;—a book—it had never been read;—a file of parliamentary papers—they were still in a virgin state. I asked Auguste what he intended to do with his treasures of political learning. "Why," said my honourable friend, as he finished his toilette, "the volumes and pamphlets you see in such profusion are chiefly parliamentary documents distributed in the Chamber, or sent round to the Deputies. It was my wish to examine them with attention, as in duty bound; but finding it impossible to peruse them all, I made up my mind to read none. However, we have in the Chamber lengthened conversations on all subjects, which is, after all, the best way of acquiring a thorough understanding of most questions. Conversation is superior to books. A clever orator discoursing is a living book. In this way, Casimir Perier received his political education." I was thunderstruck. The noblemen of the old school, those sons of illustrious dames, who knew everything without learning anything, were not wont to pride themselves on their extensive reading. But,

certainly, they would have been puzzled to give so ingenious an excuse as my honourable friend.

I was desirous to know a little more of the erudite conversations so successfully attended by Auguste. I followed him one day to the Palais Bourbon; he went to one of the committee-rooms, and I took a seat in a public box. The debate was expected to be interesting, and the house was crowded.

A stranger in the present Chamber of Deputies is most forcibly struck by the aspect of confusion and general medley. The physiognomy of the Chamber is always fluctuating, and one cannot distinguish any prominent feature. Previous to the Revolution of 1830, it was easy enough to determine the Deputy's leading characteristics. The age of forty, under which he could not be admitted, represented his extreme youth; the required qualification of forty pounds a year taxes, could only appertain to a man of some landed property; and these two leading features showed at once the rich proprietor of mature age, impelled by a slight spark of ambition to leave his country-seat and transplant himself to the Parisian soil. With these first signs it was not difficult to connect others from the observation of habits, manners, language, ideas, and even outward appearance, congenial to departed times. Some had belonged to the Empire, others bore the stamp of emigration; in one were visible signs of long banishment, in another symptoms of regret, and in a third, rays of hope not extinguished. A few Deputies, whose aspect formed a remarkable exception, were the representatives of the present generation. Each class had its peculiar feature; uniformity of costume was also of great assistance to the observer, and then the portrait of the French Deputy could be easily drawn.

But all this is altered in the present day. The Deputy's years may range from thirty to the most advanced age; though a property qualification is still enforced,* the Chamber is open nevertheless to the whole middle class, and the list of candidates includes intelligent men of all ranks and professions. Moreover, the fearful political events that have left every where indelible marks of their occurrence, are now no longer recent, and public men who bear their stamp are become exceptions. There is no longer an official costume, and nothing striking marks the Deputy's personal appearance; no external characteristics point him out to public curiosity, and he cannot be distinguished but by peculiar signs, perceptible only to keen observers.

Deputies of grave deportment were not numerous among those who poured into the Chamber through every door. There is no reason to find fault with a Deputy simply because he is like everybody else, and it would be unjust to complain that representatives are separated by no outward distinction from their constituents; yet I do not know how to account for it, though certain it is that we are almost vexed to see them too easily confounded with the common herd. There must be in our nature more aristocratic instinct and feeling of caste than we are generally inclined to admit.

There is no difference between the Deputy of the Opposition and the Member seated on the ministerial benches. Observe that honourable gentleman yonder, still young, and dressed with peculiar care. His air is cold and solemn; his carriage dignified, his gesture stiff, his countenance bears an habitual expression of contempt, and his whole demeanour is indicative of a disposition verging towards haughtiness.†

* Every Member must pay at least twenty pounds per ann. taxes. † M. Odilon Barrot.

He is one of the most strenuous champions of equality. That Member whose dress is so simple, and who is distinguished by his frank and open countenance, his easy and courteous manner, and his animated yet benevolent language, is the great advocate of social distinctions.* Would you see the most eminent of our statesmen? Look at that little man, whose witty sallies enliven the group of Deputies collected round him.† He has all the majesty of a schoolboy.—There is a Deputy walking in. Mark his solemn costume, his important carriage, his meditative brow: one would think that the destiny of empires rests in his hands. He is,—no matter whom; there is not a more idle Deputy in the whole Chamber; he is known never to have taken the least part in any discussion. Shall I relate the circumstances connected with his election? They form a pleasant piece of parliamentary gossip. His stiff manners and pompous behaviour were a constant source of misery to his family; he was at home a most severe and irremoveable censor, finding fault with everything, and delivering his eternal lectures in the most heavy and monotonous tone. At last the idea struck his wife, who is possessed of considerable landed property, that she could command sufficient interest to carry his election. Her scheme succeeded admirably, and the Chamber is now gratified with the sight of his frigid countenance, to the great relief of his family.

The Chamber of Deputies contains only one class of persons conspicuous by their numbers—the Gentlemen of the Bar; and, faithful to their origin, they take great care to remain barristers at the parliamentary rostrum.

To return to my friend. Shortly afterwards I saw Auguste engaged with half-a-dozen members in lively conversation; but they were all so merry, and laughing so heartily at each others' sallies, that I could not think they were discussing politics. Moreover, each of the gay deputies was provided with an eye-glass, which he directed towards the ladies in the public boxes, and they were evidently at some pains to show that their attention was engrossed by the fair portion of the audience. The precautions were, however, quite unnecessary; for no one would have taken them for political characters. After the adjournment of the debate, I went to seek Auguste, resolved to ask for some explanation. In the lobby of the House, Deputies were collected in groups, some arranging dinner parties, others discussing the merits of pictures lately exhibited; in the library, many were reading; loud laughing was heard in the refreshment-room; and in the hall, an animated discussion was going on relative to a young cantatrice. I persisted in thinking that Auguste could not be taking part in any of these futile proceedings, and not looking for him among either of these groups, I was unable to find him.

In the evening I went to the opera. The first person I saw there was Auguste. His morning costume in the Chamber was that of a young dandy: now I found him dressed like a grave magistrate. He was standing in the Foyer, surrounded by a circle of a dozen persons, and directly he saw me he beckoned me to approach, without interrupting the conversation, which related to one of the most interesting questions of the politics of the day.

Auguste seemed to me to be threatened by some terrible crisis: he was gloomy, and evidently preoccupied; his whole appearance betrayed his inward agitation. He had received letters from the country; his constituents were disappointed with

* M. Berryer. † M. Thiers.

him, and vexed to look in vain for the report of his speeches. Many questioned his abilities, while others ascribed his silence to the unsteadiness of his political opinions. There was no means to avoid it: the time was come when he must speak.

To say the truth, notwithstanding my friend's exposition of principles of political economy on the hustings—notwithstanding his professions of attachment to the cause of progressive reform, and to the general interests of the country, and his sanguine and decided support of many generous Utopias, he had only sought a stepping-stone for a brilliant introduction to Parisian society. He knew that, once returned a Deputy, he would be well received everywhere, and placed at once on a good footing; he was certain to acquire a personal value and a real influence, as he would at least have the disposal of a vote, and a vote is a thing in constant demand, which entitles its possessor to great respect. The Count de * * *, a young diplomatist who had been returned before him for a neighbouring district, had frequently told Auguste that, in the drawing-rooms of Paris, Deputies were treated with the most flattering distinction. This consideration, and of course his love of public good, had decided Auguste at once to offer himself as a candidate. Now he was rather disappointed to find a troublesome duty interfere with his charming arrangements for his Parisian life. A bill closely affecting the local interests of his constituency was about to come under discussion. Nothing could justify his silence on such a question: and he came to the determination of making his maiden speech.

To me his anxiety was utterly unaccountable, and I was confounded by his sudden return of modesty, bordering on fear, and far exceeding his former timidity. What was become of his self-confidence, and his immense stores of learning so easily acquired in his conversation with eminent men! How on a sudden had disappeared those grounds of security on which he had so prided himself a few days before? . . . It is easily explained:—In the midst of his pre-occupations, Auguste's vanity had misled him, but he still retained his good sense, and was now fully conscious of his own inferiority. He could not help thinking of the young Deputies who, on their entrance into the House, had rushed straight to the rostrum, there to sink into insignificance, like moths fluttering in the flame of a candle, and burning themselves to death in an instant. He could name all those provincial heroes,—those young glories of their department,—those country phœnixes,—who had sunk at once, hissed down by their audience and the public press. He remembered many of these ardent reformers so anxious for promoting public improvements, many fervent patriots and political dreamers sadly unsuccessful in their first attempt, and now buried in deserved obscurity. Hence his anxiety on the eve of the approaching trial, which was to determine his rank among his colleagues, and enable his constituents to pass judgment on him. Alas! what vanity was perceptible through all my friend's agitation.

The composition of Auguste's extempore speech took him three days. In order to make himself perfectly its master, he recited it several times with and without the manuscript to the chairs in his apartment. I am tolerably conversant with parliamentary debates, and know how the most celebrated orators of the Chamber prepare to speak in public. I have seen one revise with his manuscript the printed report of one of his most admired *improvisations*. I have followed another delivering by heart a speech of my own composition. It was I who, during the last session, pro-

phesied that * * * would speak ere long, having remarked him carefully taking down for several weeks all the good things said in his presence. I have more than once noticed in his long walks a man, whose opinions have great authority in the house, laboriously preparing his speeches. None of the secrets of oratorical composition are unknown to me. Improvisation in the Chamber of Deputies and at public meetings has some analogy to friendship in the world. The name is common enough, but the article is very rare. Only a few powerful minds, some of them vivified by inspiration, others by a rare quickness united to great perspicuity, or by profound convictions, and various and extensive learning, are to be excepted from the sweeping sentence; and it must be acknowledged that man has to contend with great difficulties in making effective use of the faculty of speech, bestowed on him to express, or, as some will have it, to conceal his thoughts. I was of some assistance to Auguste in this serious emergency. A last rehearsal took place in his apartment; I personated the honourable members, and imitated the best I could the different noises of the audience, from the hum of private conversations to the murmur of angry interruptions and the storm of indignant feelings. I advised my friend always to keep his manuscript at hand, to avoid the painful situation of that novice orator, who, being at a loss for ideas and words to express them, was abruptly told by the President (Dupin) to refer to his manuscript. Overwhelmed with shame and confusion, the abashed orator immediately descended from the rostrum.

The next day Auguste, prepared for all contingencies, ascended the rostrum, and delivered his speech without any hesitation and most accurately. Nobody paid the least attention to it; the Chamber was very thin, the President had just taken the chair, and my honourable friend was only listened to by a few ladies, whom he had favoured with tickets for the grand occasion, and were, with myself, the only persons in the secret of the forthcoming début.

I felt anxious to know the sensations of the new orator, rather expecting an ostentatious display. To my great surprise, Auguste was humble and diffident. He confessed that the rostrum had seemed to him raised to an extraordinary elevation; that at first he felt giddy, his tongue was tied, his mouth parched, and without the assistance of the *eau sucrée* he would have been unable to utter a syllable. His limbs trembled under him, and his feelings resembled the emotion ascribed by Charlet to the soldier, Jean Jean, when he heard the first gun fired. I tried to console him as well as I could. "M. de Pradt," said I, "was never able to speak in the Chamber when on his legs; all the arguments that he had so elaborately studied, abandoned him; and he used despondingly to say, that he would willingly give ten years of his life for six months' practice at the rostrum. I have heard several of the most experienced public orators confess that they never ascended the rostrum without a painful feeling, and could not commence the exordium of their speech without a powerful effort."

Delivered under the most unfavourable circumstances, Auguste's speech was one of those to which reporters invariably apply the following stock phrase:—"The Honourable Deputy spoke in a very low tone of voice, which failed to reach us in the gallery." But I, foreseeing this, had taken measures accordingly. Assisted by Auguste, I had prepared four copies of the extempore speech, and sent them to the leading newspapers; and in the evening we went round to revise the proofs, and

insert at the conclusion of the most striking paragraphs the sympathetic words, "Hear! hear!" "Profound sensation," and "General applause."

We ventured to alter a few words, escaped in the warmth of the discussion; and a paragraph or two added after the debate, gave relief to the weak points of the speech. Such are the precautions constantly taken by every Deputy careful of his reputation as a speaker; and ours secured for Auguste the well-earned congratulations of his constituents.

Numerous and flattering were the felicitations he received. He was the true protector of his district, the saviour of his country, and the glory of France. Every letter teemed with praise, which was accompanied in every instance by a request, a commission, a petition, or the demand for some favour. Each constituent had a wish to express, certain hopes to reveal, some expectations to hint. The Deputy was become on a sudden the guardian angel of his district, but it was not intended to leave him in the quiet enjoyment of a sinecure. He had purchases to make for the ladies of his neighbourhood,—books, millinery, jewellery, china, and furniture; he had to advocate every claim; to support all rights, old and new, past, present, and future; to foster all complaints; to countenance all pretensions, and all petty, insatiable ambitions. Two or three schoolboys were entrusted to his care: he was to go and see them often at college, and to send for and amuse them on holidays; and was actually to be responsible for the faults of four or five law and medical students, whose conduct he was commissioned to inspect. Nor was this all. His arrondissement had numerous claims on the budget, and instructed him to sue the Government for grants of money, books, pictures, and statues. They set forth their claims to new bridges and new roads; they had valleys to fill up, mountains to level, and rivers to divert from their course; they wanted a regiment to enliven their principal towns, &c., &c., &c. Auguste was unable to stand it. Heaps of letters were brought him by every post; and incessant were the demands made upon his purse.

The character of guardian angel of a country district is not maintained without a world of trouble. Auguste's door was besieged every morning by crowds of eager applicants. He had countless letters of introduction to write; and all his time was taken up by innumerable visitors. He was the natural comforter of all the misfortunes of his department. An unceasing call was made upon his cash-box, for loans or for charity. In the Chamber, he was assailed by fresh importunities. Some came up from the country on purpose to see and hear him; and for them he could do no less than procure tickets of admission to the Chambers, and to view the public monuments. He was, moreover, expected to devote a few hours a day to do the honours of Paris to his constituents, and to introduce at least the leading men amongst them to the Minister.

Meanwhile, in the midst of these tribulations, honours came to console him: he was invited to Court. He now began to think much of himself, and to consider whether some high office of state would not suit him. After having so often exerted his influence in the service of others, he felt that he had some right not entirely to forget his own interest. Without any very strong political bias, and free from unjust prejudices, Auguste never displayed a stern hostility to power; but when he entered public life, he wisely determined to avoid any engagement that

would hazard his independence. I cannot affirm whether any change has since taken place in his convictions; but he lately told me, that if those fierce opponents who are always combating men in power, had more opportunities to see them at less distance, they would undoubtedly be less severe. It is true that Auguste is now a member of the Legion of Honour, and he affirms that the red ribbon is the indispensable appendage to a Deputy. It is my opinion that, so far from conferring a distinction upon my friend, his ribbon throws him among the common herd.

The Deputy obeys the law of the successive epochs of life defined by philosophers. Young, he is an ardent promoter of reforms, and easily led by external impressions. In maturer age, he grows ambitious; and whatever path he may follow, be sure it is selected as a road to fame or power,—the two exclusive objects of his predilection. Old, the past is his all: he commends, praises, and venerates it. He would fain believe, as he tries to persuade others, that he regrets the time when his convictions were more generally admitted; but he mourns only for his departed physical strength, and the sinking power of his intellect.

To whichsoever party the Deputy may belong, you will recognize him readily by the solemn explanation of his political principles. There is something ludicrous in the assurance infused into his person by his still recent election, when blended with provincial manners. Accustomed to mix with the great on terms of equality, he seems to think he has a right to treat other people without much reverence. He is fond of talking of what he will do, of what he will prevent, and of what he will allow. There is something grotesque in his own opinion of his political power; and the gravity of our national institutions is hardly sufficient to repress the laughter prompted by his extreme arrogance. The affected dignity of certain Deputies has created an entirely new feature in our social life,—political pedantry.

This reminds me of an anecdote that I cannot forbear relating. A few months since, after a gay evening, a party of young gentlemen were riding on donkeys in the Bois de Boulogne, after the time fixed for closing the gates, which were accordingly shut against them; and the keeper, following his instructions, declined to open them. Among the merry party was a Deputy, who, to each and every objection of the gate-keeper, answered, with the utmost gravity, from his donkey, "Open, Sir, I am a Member of the Chamber of Deputies."

Our National Council contains many modest and scrupulous men, who resist the pleasures of the world, and the allurements of Court. There are industrious Deputies who devote themselves, with patience and disinterestedness, to laborious and difficult, yet useful research. There are men of noble organization, of high principles, and of superior talent. In the Chamber may be seen truly honest politicians, sincere lovers of their country, men well acquainted with its real wants, and some among them are remarkable for their courageous perseverance; but these sit with dandies, nonentities, and flies, who are incessantly buzzing about the wheels of the state coach. The Chamber contains twenty different types; and it would be impossible for the closest observer to compose from its elements a generic character.

This indistinct feature may easily be accounted for. From our political organization aristocracy has disappeared, and democracy is not yet constituted. Everything moves and fluctuates between these two extremes. The Daguerreotype itself could not fix on paper these mutable images.



THE LADY'S MAID.



THE PARISIAN LADY'S MAID.

BY AUGUSTE DE LACROIX.



SEEKING love stories, from inclination or profession, you are perhaps fond of fireside tales and scenes of private life; or, novelist and tale-writer, (pardon the supposition,) you are a collector of anecdotes and a chronicler of intrigues; or, having a talent for story-telling, you perchance cultivate scandal merely for the pleasure of repeating it to your friends; or, you are ambitious, and would fain owe success to your influence with the fair sex; or, again, you are handsome, clever, and desperately in love:—In either case, reader, take our advice, and before entering the drawing-room, bestow a glance on the antechamber; the antechamber leads to the drawing-room, and the drawing-room to the boudoir: before paying your compliments to the lady of the house, smile on her maid.

THE LADY'S MAID! The very name conveys a mysterious idea, yet strikes at once the dullest mind, and excites the most dormant curiosity. The name alone suggests a world of unpublished anecdotes; of thoughts and sentiments buried in the depth of the heart; of stories, affecting and ludicrous, breathing the very soul of love, and anon teeming with bloody horrors. Othello, Geronte, Scapin, Desdemona, and Celimene, rise to the imagination. But of all these physiognomies, the most youthful, the most smiling, the most enchanting of all these types, the truest even at the present day, and the most graceful, is Dorine, the charming soubrette,

whom every body knows; Dorine of the sprightly form, the adventurous foot, the hand and eye so mischievous; Dorine, who bears and receives all the emblematical nosegays and perfumed billets-doux; who like a good girl protects the love affair of Marianne, holds out her hand to gallants, and her cheek to Frontin! The pretty parrot! She it is who trips so lightly from the servants' hall to the antechamber, from the antechamber to the staircase, perching and chattering, in turn, on the first, second, and third floors; the morning in the porter's lodge, and at evening in the aërial cage to which she climbs to sleep, and to dream. She has changed her name, her language, and her dress; but she is still the same person.

Her name is no longer Dorine; she answers to Angeline, Rose, Adèle, or Celestine; no longer does she say Frontin, Mascarille, or Crispin. Let us, however, call her awhile by her former and prettier name, her patronymic, that we may make the reader better acquainted with her.

The Lady's Maid, like the cook, is, in consequence of her position, beyond the pale, if not above the station, of servitude. In fact, these are two powers, of which one reigns only two hours of the twelve, and the other all day. Everybody in the house is well persuaded of this truth, and admits it without dispute. And who would deny the superiority of the Lady's Maid? Who would compete with her for authority and power? Not her master's valet, certainly. Were he Scapin himself, Dorine would nonplus him, poor fellow, in less time than it takes him to nonplus his master. Has she not on her side, in addition to an equal position, the indisputable advantage of female wit and ingenuity? The valet may be dismissed and replaced without the economy of the family being disturbed thereby. His intercourse with his master is neither so important nor so confidential, as that of the Lady's Maid with her mistress; men are less confiding than their wives: the master generally has less occasion to impart secrets—the valet less interest to know them. His vocation is of a more general nature, and even in the best families, his duties are not always very strictly defined; the circle enlarges or diminishes around him, according to circumstances and the wants of the moment; overwhelmed at times with work, he not unfrequently encroaches on his fellow-servants' domain, without becoming, in consequence, richer or happier. Occasionally, he is impressed into his mistress's service; and sometimes one sees a valet suddenly metamorphosed into a groom, a coachman, or a footman; but who ever saw a Lady's Maid transformed into a nurse or nursery maid? The incompatibility is evident: the Lady's Maid belongs exclusively to the mistress of the house; she is her private property, and may not be touched without her permission; on her depend her mistress's comfort, well-being, and happiness—nay, perhaps even more than that. In truth, all her mistress's secrets, as well of her heart as of her toilette, are known to the Lady's Maid; the latter it is her business to manage,—the former cannot escape her. Her mistress belongs to her, body and soul. Was a letter received this morning? Dorine knows from whom it came, and why her mistress shortly afterwards went out alone and on foot; she could account for the severe head-ache which prevented her mistress from going to the ball the day before yesterday with her husband. The Lady's Maid knows the exact amount of the milliner's and dress-maker's bills. She knows the precise quantity of wadding required to line a pretty woman's stays; the measure of tears that a tender-hearted mistress can shed on occasion. She knows (what

does she not know?) that no woman is faultless in the eyes of her Lady's Maid, as no man is a hero in the eyes of his valet.

See how everybody in the house bows before her, and Frontin first of all. He is almost afraid to put his arm round her waist, and hardly ventures to snatch a kiss, such is his dread of her little majesty! And is not Dorine in reality a queen?—queen of the boudoir, as of the servants' hall; queen over her mistress, whose secrets she possesses; and queen of her equals, whose fate is in her hands? Dorine enjoys her lady's confidence, and her lady is all-powerful with her master. Let Dorine say only a word to her mistress, and her mistress to her husband, and it is all over with the imprudent fellow-servant who has offended her, or presumed to contest her influence! Dorine is the beginning and the end, the arm that strikes in the dark, the planner and executor of all deeds.

What matters it whether Dorine be fair or dark, tall or short, or even (if you will) plain! She will be no less admired, courted, and beloved, like all pretty and witty women of five-and-twenty, with graceful figure and alluring looks. If not courted by some tall and handsome "Chasseur," or some crafty little valet who "mademoiselles" her, she almost invariably condescends to notice favourably some dandified linendraper's assistant, or sixth clerk in an attorney's office, whom she met one holiday at the Chaumière or at the Ermitage. M. Oscar, Alfred, or Ernest, is a very *genteel* young man, who wears an elegant moustache, and yellow gloves on Sunday, and frequents only respectable public gardens. His manners are very polite: he takes off his hat when he invites a lady to dance, and does not allow himself to be carried too far by the excitement of the waltz and gallopade. In the course of the quadrille, the gallant cavalier thrice restores the dropped pocket-handkerchief to his divinity; thrice she smiles, and thrice they exchange pressure of hands. Her fate is sealed; Dorine is conquered, Oscar triumphs, and the happy couple repair to the shade of by no means mysterious groves, to exchange vows of eternal love, which generally lasts just as long as the *bals champêtres* of the season.

The Lady's Maid, in common with all persons endowed with keen perceptive powers, is a great observer: this is at once a mental enjoyment, and, in her position, a valuable qualification. It is well known that servants have a hundred eyes, as many ears, and often twice as many tongues. This treble power, increased tenfold by constant practice, they never fail to use for their amusement and personal advantage, generally to the detriment of their masters, whom they observe and endeavour to copy, and whom they constantly watch and betray. See how the valet searches his master's heart as with a magnifying-glass; he will discover the hidden sources of all his joys and sorrows; turn to account his secret inclinations: and when he has traitorously possessed himself of all his peculiarities, he will unmercifully caricature his most innocent foibles and most harmless peccadillos. Frontins and Mascarilles were certainly the inventors of mimicry; it was not till after their time that caricatures were cast in a mould, or traced upon paper; and the best living mimics are still to be found in the servants' hall. But we must except the Lady's Maid. She is generally more indulgent; she imitates, but does not parody; and she is quite in earnest when she copies her mistress. It is true that like her lady she lisps, assumes her gait, affects the same manner, the same expressions, the same gestures. There are days when, like her mistress, she is low-spirited,

and one may overhear her say, as she glances with a languishing smile on the mirror, "How frightful I am to-day!" When alone, she practises her mistress's manner and smile; sometimes she turns over the leaves of books left out of the bookcase, and passes hours in the evening reading in her room books lent her by her lover. When she quotes, she confounds Lamartine with Paul de Kock, Balzac with Pigault Lebrun. She knows the names of all the greatest artists; she sometimes accompanies her mistress to Saint Roch, or the Exhibition, and at times will converse on music and painting, aping, with a pedantic air, before her gaping fellow-servants, fashionable phrases and technical expressions. She will carry her mania for imitation so far as to put on, "only to see how it would look," her lady's dresses and jewels. One day her mistress, on unexpectedly entering her bedroom, surprises Dorine giving herself airs before the glass, to the great satisfaction of the handsome footman, who in his turn is strutting about the room, and ogling his companion with an affected air of gallantry, in evident imitation of his master. Terrible is the scene, and the counterfeit lady narrowly escapes dismissal, to flirt at ease out of place with the liveried Antinoüs. But Dorine begins to cry; Dorine is so attached, so discreet! and the Antinoüs, who is no less than six feet high, is one of those men who are not easily replaced.

The Lady's Maid is eminently sensitive and affectionate by nature, and her tender disposition is well fostered by the circumstances that surround her. Constantly placed between the license of her fellow-servants and the more refined language of her superiors, breathing by turns the intoxicating air of the boudoir and the tainted atmosphere of the servants' hall, her imagination becomes excited, and her bewildered judgment can hardly protect her against too many temptations. And how should it be otherwise in a young woman of twenty, with acute perceptions, a quick ear, and large bright eyes? The Lady's Maid has been vilely slandered; many have calumniated her, and few, very few, have done her justice. Malice and ingratitude, say we,—yes, ingratitude. Remember, fastidious young man, the days of your happy childhood; try to recollect your most delightful dreams, and say, ingrate, whether among all the romance of the past, amidst all the fond tenderness lavished on your early years, all the kisses accumulated on your fair forehead and your rosy cheeks—whether you have forgotten the affectionate girl who loved you more fondly than your nurse, who could sooner lull you to sleep in her arms, and who so sweetly kissed your tiny white hands and your large blue eyes? And, more recently,—yes, more recently,—why blush? Love ennobles his votaries. Have you forgotten her true, delicate, disinterested passion? Nay, have you ever since experienced such a love? Who showed more devotion to your slightest whim? Remember how eager she was to serve you; how many times she took your part in your absence, and assumed the responsibility of the faults that you were unable to conceal. Did she not enter your room at all times on the slightest pretext, begging your pardon, when she came to serve or worship you; smiling on all occasions; bestowing on you many a happy look on the sly; passing and repassing near you; stroking unobserved your hand with her own, and sweeping your face with her long tresses; displacing, in order to replace, everything about you; fidgetty, anxious, and yet happy; yes, too happy to be rewarded with a single look, or the least sign of gratitude, that she would have begged on her knees, and

of which you were so niggardly? Confess that you learnt from Dorine these gentle artifices of woman's love. Ah! is not this an unique passage in both your lives, imbued for you with sweet revelations, and for poor Dorine with inexpressible anguish? Thus was her solitary chamber transformed for you by love into a downy nest, poor little bird that you were, soothed and content; while Dorine was almost always absent, scarcely daring to trust her trembling feet within the precincts of your hiding-place. Be guided by us, and gratefully cherish such a remembrance. Many young men, (and those not the happiest,) brought up beneath the paternal roof, receive this gentle initiation elsewhere; and with all due deference to ye, high and fashionable ladies, be it said, the first and most interesting chapter in the history of our loves, the most brilliantly coloured and the richest of our youthful emotions, are inseparably connected with the Lady's Maid. Dorine takes precedence of Cidalise.

The Lady's Maid is all love! Excellent nature, and touching destiny! Her indefatigable exertions are devoted to her mistress's comfort; and, as long as she may suffice, her young master's happiness is entrusted to her exclusive care. She beholds the very love that her first blandishments awakened, insensibly transferred to a higher quarter. She sees it, and many a sigh it costs her; but she does not weep, nor manifest any outward grief; she is not allowed to complain. Such is her fate. Within, as well as without, all is mystery; her heart is full of secrets,—her own, and those of others. Who dares to say that the Lady's Maid is indiscreet? What rejected lover, or evil-intentioned author, ventured to give breath to this scandalous thought? The Lady's Maid indiscreet! Indiscretion implies curiosity; but the Lady's Maid knows everything. She is the bearer of that letter into which you suppose she is peeping, and she it is who will take back the answer. Then will not at least partial confidence be required, to secure her prudence and direct her skill?

Not satisfied with attacking her morality, and the qualities she employs in her mistress's service, her traducers have gone so far as to question her principles. Writers, who fancy themselves deep thinkers, dramatic authors and actors, and all persons inclined to scepticism, affect to doubt her disinterestedness; and have thought it the height of wit to represent her delivering a letter with one hand, and receiving a bribe with the other. Fie! This may be the case with Figaro and Scapin, scurvy valets, and impudent rogues; but depend upon it, gentlemen, Dorine no more sells her precious talent than her pretty person: her mistress has a constant claim upon the one, and the other she perhaps gives to some handsome young man of her acquaintance. A grateful smile, a pat on the chin, a kiss—one single kiss—snatched from her lips, are the only reward she expects for the tender billet-doux delivered by her soft hand. In faith, her ambition does no farther go.

After this, command her services, dispose of her as you will; fear nothing, she is yours; she will watch for you night and day, will walk before you, smooth all difficulties, avert all dangers, open all doors,—not excepting her own, if necessary. Amiable being!—May all valets present and future, the handsomest footmen, the most dandified shopmen, and the most fashionable young clerks, reward you with constant love and happiness, pic-nic dinners, boxes at the Funambules; with twelvepenny scarfs, hair rings, aprons, silver watches, pinchbeck chains; with

cyder, stewed chestnuts, songs; and return, besides, a hundred-fold, the good you do, and the services you render! Go, fair messenger of love; let the evil-minded defame you as you pass; do you take no notice of those honest women who blame you aloud; take our word for it, you have their secret approbation. Go, set out on your errand of love, messenger of hope and happiness; hasten, glide, but take care of your delicate white stockings and well-polished shoes; hold up, that you may not splash, the skirt of your muslin gown, and display your neat and slender ankle; cast your eyes towards the ground, in order that you may see and be seen to more advantage; young men stop or follow you, to examine you more at their ease; and among the fine ladies whom you pass, more than one would willingly give her velvet dress for your slender and graceful form, and barter her costly laced mantilla for the fair skin of your shoulders, not entirely concealed by your plain blue scarf. Even your jaunty and coquettish apron, like every other article of your dress, becomes you with a grace peculiarly your own, charming Dorine!

Whence comes the Lady's Maid, and whither does she go? What are her origin, her destiny, and to what end is she fated? Is she a myth? Is she the personification of that first and most Christian virtue which inspired the sublime words, "Much shall be forgiven;" and again, "If you give only a cup of water?" The Lady's Maid has given more than a thousand; she gives at least one every evening of her life. What has she not given? She has given, or nearly so, the best years of her life, her increasing cares, the work of her hands, her good taste, her best skill, and her zeal, to her mistress;—her leisure, her thoughts, her dreams, her white shoulders, and her rosy lips, she has given to love, to pleasure,—to ingrates. Once more, whence does she come?—From the east, or from the west; from Lorraine, or Normandy? Was she born beneath the humble thatch of a cottage, or in the obscure garret of a porter in the Rue Quincampoix, or in the Chaussée d'Antin? This grave question we have long pondered and turned over in our mind, and all in vain. Perhaps it may indistinctly be resolved in favour of some one of the eighty-six departments, and the fourteen arrondissements of the Seine. What are her future hopes and wishes? To what does she look forward after her present busy yet idle life, so actively spent in the service of others, and in forgetfulness of herself? Alas! she is going,—

——"Où va toute chose,
Où va la feuille de rose,
Et la feuille de laurier;"

where the two sweetest flowers of life are going,—love and youth; where all her sex, Duchesses and Countesses, as well as Lady's Maids, are rapidly hastening.

Twenty-five years mark the Lady's Maid's meridian. After five more years, she begins to decline; hereafter, she is only the shadow of her former self, until the period of her final disappearance, her total eclipse, in her fortieth year. This last decade of her services is a long night, which must not be reckoned as part of the life of the true Lady's Maid.

How wonderfully she is improved when she reaches the brilliant period of her existence! She is no longer the shy, timid young girl, put out of countenance by a look, frightened by a word, knowing neither when to speak, nor when to keep

silence, nor how to tell a story in her mistress's service; who overwhelmed her mistress with her attentions, and was not even able to dress her. Dorine is no less kind than formerly; habit has only developed and strengthened her attachment; but her zeal, now more enlightened, is more serviceable. Observation and reflection have sharpened her natural intelligence, as it happens sooner or later with all women. And only see how much she has gained,—how gallantly she now becomes her uniform! Fine stockings and faultless shoes replace the clumsy boots that formerly disgraced her feet. How gracefully does she tread with her charming little duchess's foot terminating a dancer's leg! No longer does Dorine, as formerly, make the floor creak beneath her heavy footsteps, to the great derangement of her mistress's nerves. She no longer walks,—she glides!—This is the crowning perfection of the Lady's Maid. The very word is a poem: it is the omega of science; it completes all her other qualifications. If you would judge of the merit of a Lady's Maid, make her walk in your presence: the trial is infallible; you will guess at once, from her demeanour, what she is, and whence she comes; you will recognize the stamp of the true lady in her elegant and easy bearing; a certain affectation in her carriage will betray the *bourgeoise;* and be sure that the woman of indifferent character will not fail to fix her impress on the step, as well as on the manners and language of her Maid. A book might be written on this subject. To glide is not only graceful in the Maid: it is also a precious talent, inestimable for her mistress and for herself,—nay, it may be a virtue.

Dorine now has the carriage of a little queen. To see her lightly trip across the drawing-room, or, judging from her dignified deportment and amiable looks, when seated at needle-work, you would take her for the mistress of the house, were it not for her indispensable apron and cap. The white apron is the Lady's Maid's especial abomination: it is her Nisus' gown; she looks at it with anger, and touches it with horror; it is the familiar and implacable enemy that accompanies her everywhere, which distinguishes, betrays, and dishonours her. But for it, alas! how many charming young men, and rich old ones, would have fallen in love with her, courted, adored, and perhaps married her! Who will deliver her from the thraldom of the fatal white linen? Oscar, Alfred, ungrateful young men, you accept her heart and reject her hand! Have a care! sooner than remain all her life clothed in white, like virgins whose face she may have, without their insensibility, Dorine will make a tragical end! She will marry Frontin, who promises to free her from the apron; or little Figaro, who every morning hands her a love-letter wrapped up like a curl-paper; she would, if the worst came to the worst, marry the most thick-headed of collectors,—yea, even some entirely junior clerk of her acquaintance. The apron is the line of demarcation,—the only barrier that separates the Lady's Maid from the free woman (we do not mean this for a quibble),—so slight, and yet so insurmountable a barrier! Compelled to exist with her apron, the Lady's Maid takes it off on the least occasion: it is the first thing she removes on entering her own room; she never wears it at table, nor in the hall, nor in the kitchen, nor in the ante-chamber; she removes it before crossing the drawing-room, directly her mistress is absent, or when she is not looking at her. We have seen more female artifice displayed on this trifling subject than would be required to conduct the most intricate intrigue, and mislead the most jealous of husbands. Inflexible mistresses have taken for their

motto, "We will maintain the apron;" and they have maintained it. We have witnessed obstinate resistance on the one hand, and noble sacrifices on the other. High-spirited Lady's Maids, after desperate efforts, resign their duties, and retire conquered—but not humbled.

Who may appreciate all the Lady's Maid's worth, when arrived at the most complete stage of developement? She has made herself acquainted with the extent of her duties, and now well understands all the difficulties of her position. She has called to her aid, and employed in her mistress's service, all the qualities bestowed on her by nature,—all that experience has taught her. Her mistress's most secret thoughts are known to Dorine; Dorine has seen and observed her in all circumstances; Dorine knows what she likes, what is disagreeable, and what painful to her; Dorine knows how to console her, and how to touch her heart; Dorine knows her past, her present, and almost her future; Dorine knows whom she loved, whom she loves, and perhaps even whom she will love; Dorine has so studied her mistress that she knows her by heart. Never may Dorine be disappointed in the favours she asks of her mistress, in her projects, in her hopes, in her fears. Nothing is left to chance,—Dorine can foretell everything. But perhaps the reader will say, "The Lady's Maid you describe is a confidant, and I no longer recognize the identity. All ladies have a Lady's Maid, beyond doubt; but, God be thanked! all ladies do not need a confidant." Pardon us, reader, you have mistaken our meaning. We honour all ladies in general, and our fair readers in particular. We know, moreover, that the masterpiece of the creation is at least as weak a creature as ourselves, and certainly much more crafty and subtile; cunning is her strength,—artifice her element. We admit degrees and shades in everything; but you will not refuse to grant in return, that even the most irreproachable woman has her "little" secrets, and her "innocent" mysteries. Hence it is evident that we differ only in degree. Deepen or relieve the shades as you will, the same features still remain, and the portrait will be no less true.

And now, Dorine, that you have accomplished your uniform and well-sustained career, furtively gleaning for yourself a few stray pleasures in the vast field on which you have sowed for others so many secret joys and billets-doux; now that handsome young men no longer stop to gaze after you in the street; now that love has flown away, and time has subdued the lustre of your black eyes, and the rosy hue of your pouting lips; now that you hide your hair, and no longer dare smile; now that you have lost all, even your pretty name of Dorine;—come hither, my good Marguerite. We have both grown older since those days. Time has, alas! destroyed our nest, and we no longer have wings. Many of those whom you loved have forsaken you, many have forgotten you,—from my memory you have never been absent. Come, take care of the old man, as you took care of the child, my good Marguerite; and devote to him your declining days, as formerly you lavished your youthful years upon his childhood. I do not forbid you to love me still, Marguerite; but if you would have me love you, cure my rheumatism. Dear old nurse, bring me my slippers; warm well my bed, and carefully shut my bedroom door behind you. Dorine, good-b'ye; good night, Marguerite.



THE SPECULATOR.



THE SPECULATOR.

BY VISCOUNT D'ARLINCOURT.

" La Gloire et la Vertu ne sont considerées aujourd'hui que comme des biens de théâtre, qui ne subsistent qu'en apparence, ou comme des fantosmes de romans après lesquels courent leurs héros, qui sont d'autres spectres et d'autres fantosmes."—Le Sieur de Balzac. 1658.



THE Speculator is the real type of man at the present day—the prominent character of the times—the great physiognomy of this money-getting age. Nobody has more elaborately studied the past, the present, and the future, with a view to compose from their united elements the groundwork of some new speculation: no one has more deeply meditated on modern monarchies and decayed dynasties— upon probable revolutions and possible republics—in order to ascertain which social chaos is likely to produce most gold. Not unlike the Deluge, the Speculator levels mountains and fills up valleys—but it is to reach fortune at the speed of the steam-engine. He tries to analyze science,—to decompose glory, convinced that every kind of smoke may create a mechanical power, and be turned to account. He amalgamates good and evil, truth and falsehood, the sacred and the profane, the just and the unjust, and applies to the compound many a chemical process to produce some new scheme, to be worked out by a share-company. The condition of the country is no more to him than a means of increasing

his profits by a tax on popular credulity: he only regards a ministerial change in connexion with its influence on the money-market, and he can tell at once what difference every crisis will make in his yearly income. He it is who has reduced trade to a mere contest of tricks,—politics to a struggle for bank-notes,—public morals to a financial question, and society at the present day to a den of Robert Macaires. All hail! thou man among men!

This great personage generally commences his financial operations without property and without money, but he is almost invariably involved in debt, which composes the only capital he invests in the trading companies formed under his direction. Thus, well may he boldly carry his undertaking to an immense extent with perfect composure and placid countenance, seeing that he risks nothing—but other people's money. True, his honour and conscience would, in many instances, be at stake; but the Speculator takes higher ground, and scarcely condescends to notice such trifles. Morality and notions of duty are not to impede his progress. His only care is to keep out of the reach of the criminal law; in this precaution rests all his respectability; and so long as he does not dread being indicted before the Court of Assize, he continues to play with outward propriety the character of virtue aspiring to genius. Very slight, indeed, is the line of separation between the citizen qualified for the exercise of all political rights, and the man disgraced by a jury's verdict; within the limits of this line, however near he verges towards it, the Speculator continues to walk, carrying his head very high. Behold him in the undisturbed enjoyment of his rights. There is no dignity above his reach. He may, according to his fancy, be juryman, informer, national guard, sheriff's officer, diplomatist, policeman, cabinet minister, rioter, or juggler,—and, summing up the multifarious attributes of these characters, he may stand equal to a king.*

Such are the benefits of civilization! In the pursuit of his prey, the Speculator will fearlessly cast himself into the labyrinths of the times and country; thence to fight or find a way out, he requires neither Theseus' sword nor Ariadne's thread. But he never dreams of fighting Minotaurs; he merely proposes to sell them French or foreign stock for the next settling day, or fascinates them with the prism of his numerous discoveries, or perhaps, throws at them poisoned balls of scrips and shares. Thus one sees monsters subdued, charmed, enraptured, hasten in their amazement to affix their signatures to stamped documents, and cordially to shake hands with the Speculator, after the fashion of kings at the commencement of their reign.

The tribe of Speculators may, to a certain extent, be divided into two classes—the rogue and the dupe. But the true Speculator, the real type of the species, assumes at once both characters. Cheater and cheated by turns, his fraud is occasionally met by still deeper fraud. He will be sold to-morrow by the brother Speculator whom he betrays to-day; charlatanism and deceit are his only wares, and his merchandize never fails to bring good returns.

The successful Speculator is always very well dressed. He will draw your attention to the admirable cloth of his coat, and to the elegant material of his waist-

* It is hardly necessary to state that this paper is written by a strong political partisan, and a faithful adherent to the elder branch of the Bourbons.

coat—both new inventions, for which he has taken out patents.—"The want of some improvement in the materials used for dress is so generally felt by the public," &c.*—To work out these patents, he has in preparation an extensive establishment, formed on an entirely new principle, and he expects a large demand for shares, as the profits are immense, and the calls will be unusually low. Hereupon the Speculator leaves you, to take his seat in an unexceptionable cab, drawn by a thorough-bred horse, which he recently purchased by the most extraordinary chance in the world. He is on the point of selling the whole turn-out to a friend of his, who is quite enchanted with it, and is to have it a bargain. He sacrifices all thoughts of profit, and will only ask a cool hundred pounds. He has the greatest objection in the world to small profits; they positively disgust him.

Arrived at the Bois de Boulogne, the Speculator alights from the very high seat whence he has been looking down on his remarkably small groom and the passengers, and hastens to join a set of rich dandies, members of the Jockey Club, to lay before them various splendid schemes, from which the shareholders are to reap heaps of gold. A few thousands only are required to set on foot each Company. One scheme is particularly attractive on account of its object, and the personal advantages held out to the enjoyment of its promoters, independent of the profits, which are to be divided among the Company. A few words will suffice to explain this famous plan. An establishment is about to be formed, on a magnificent scale, to promote a closer alliance betwixt the lords of the creation and the fairer half of mankind. The most refined taste will preside at the entertainments of this marvellous club, where temporary visitors of both sexes can only be admitted under severe restrictions. Special tickets, not transferable, and conferring unlimited privileges, will be delivered to the Directors. A regular and minute account of every transaction of the Company is to be rendered to the shareholders. The Speculator will himself undertake all the trouble of the preliminary arrangements; his friends will only be called upon to share the profits. To protect public order and serve the interests of his country are his sole objects, and every body may see at a glance all the benefits which the intended establishment will confer on public morals, and the security it will afford to private families. He is therefore acting from the most disinterested motives, and is quite satisfied to undertake, without remuneration, the management of the concern, and the duties of —accountant and cashier.

If he occupy a high position, the Speculator has not to wait long for fortune. The telegraph is always ready to assist him; riots and conspiracies may be turned to account, and are, in fact, the Speculator's philosopher's stone. He invariably knows, a few hours beforehand, what sort of product will be worked out by the various elements simmering in the parliamentary boiler. He is prepared for every solution. By the triumph of the Doctrinaires he secures one per cent. on the Stock Exchange; the success of the Opposition would be still more profitable, and only if the Court party obtained a majority would his benefits be diminished; but he is sure to be a gainer, happen what may, and the only point with him is to be in-

* A sentence similar to this is found at the commencement of all prospectuses for new Companies lately published in Paris.

formed in time. He will have no chance against him; therefore twenty men, trained for the purpose, are stationed between the Chambers and the Exchange, to act as living telegraphs, and supply him, from time to time, with a bulletin of the parliamentary fever, and the result of every division. He cares not how the crisis may end: he only wants to speculate upon it. He acquires, as if by magic, mansions, villas, and all the luxuries of life; crosses and ribbons of every order are within his reach. And will all this last? More or less, it is a sort of fantastical retinue, not unlike the descriptions in the Arabian Nights. One sees it at first gradually displayed; it shines in all its splendour, and then disappears, to pass into the possession of another. France, of course, pays for all.

The Speculator of the middle class has comfortable apartments, takes his dinner at his club, and invariably has a free admission to the royal theatres. He has a standing-place that he may call his own at Tortoni's, as well as on the Stock Exchange. He has a family, but he hardly knows where it is to be found; and no doubt he keeps a mistress somewhere. To be above the reach of political revolutions, he has a foot in the Carlist camp, his arm is enlisted in the service of Louis Philippe, and some other portion of himself is for the Republicans. He holds in equal contempt the Legion of Honour and economical soups. "There is no making anything," says he, "out of such trifles." The anniversary Fêtes of July, Punch and Judy, and political programmes, are to him all alike—bad and unprofitable jokes.

When—as it sometimes happens—he is a literary character, the Speculator sells the same manuscript five or six times. First it is published in the *feuilleton* of a daily paper; soon after, it appears in two volumes octavo; and ere long it is again sold, in a dramatized form, to the manager of one of the theatres. His production is a kind of Trilogy with three forms, three dresses, and three titles, but likewise with treble publication and treble payment,—and three times are the public taken in. Notwithstanding all this, the same work will one day be put forth in the modest shape of a 12mo or 18mo volume; and finally be included in the edition of the author's complete works.—Admirable progress of literature!

The Speculator has no taste for the country. Of what use can be fields and harvests?—To feed the inhabitants of this world? It may be there is nothing quite unreasonable about it, and perhaps the common herd may find it not undeserving of attention; but to him, the question is to provide food, not for mankind, but for speculation.

If you could only contemplate the Speculator when, comfortably reclining in his easy arm-chair, he is perusing with delight the prospectus of some wonderful Company to which he is to bring all his industry,—his friends all their money! How triumphantly he calculates every chance of gain! The more apparently impracticable the undertaking, the more certain is he of success. Try to propose, in Paris, to the élite of the intelligent capitalists, some simple and feasible plan that holds out the expectation of only an honest profit, and everybody will laugh at you. An *honest profit*, indeed!—One would quite as soon beg in the streets. Who would attach his name to such a silly affair? An honest profit!—No man of note would

share the responsibility of your scheme. What we require is a fortune made instantly, or at latest in three months; and if we must wait, then let us have some dividends in anticipation. Without such temptations, no plan is worth ten minutes' consideration.

If you were to propose a Company for stage-coaches to run without horses or coal, or a new kind of cloth to be made of jasmine, roses, and honeysuckle, first converted into pulp, and afterwards drawn, by an incomprehensible process, into fine threads, everybody would listen to you. Such plans exercise imaginative powers, excite enthusiasm, and, properly managed, offer a fair scope for juggling. The absurdity of these wonders throws no obstacle in the Speculator's way; they will at once succeed, precisely because they are absurd.

Sovereign prince of the country of chimeras, the Speculator spends a great part of his life softly soothed by his sanguine dreams. He, in imagination, sees the golden rain of Danaë falling in rich showers on his mercantile conceptions. He is unceasingly planning the conquest of all the golden fleeces that his fancy brings around him. He always bears in mind the example of the Millionaire, who first dealt in cattle, and has since—not much out of his old line—bargained for whole nations. He could name many of his comrades who, when they began life, had no acquaintance save tavern-haunters, and who now boast their intimacy with princes. It is undeniable that there are incredulous persons who laugh at his golden dreams, and pretend to know that several of these apostles of riches, and their proselytes, have been seen sinking through all their indubitable success, and amazing profits, to a room in the debtors' prison, or a bed in an hospital, or a cell in a madhouse. But these insidious hints are beneath the Speculator's notice; or, admitting the possibility of their truth, he totally disregards them. On rushes the great Speculator of the times, heedless of all opposition; and, be he encouraged by applauses, or hissed down, many are sure to follow in his track.

Observe him in his studio, surrounded by heaps of papers, and files methodically arranged. How many fortunes lie there on his table! Let us look at the files, and take some of them at random. No. 3. A new process for travelling in waggons suspended on invisible iron wires. No. 8. Coal-pits, copper, asphaltum, and quicksilver mines on the point of being discovered near one of the suburbs of Paris. No. 9. Assurance Company to provide portionless young girls with rich husbands. *Nota bene:* Serious explanations will be given on the subject. No. 17. Musical and Dancing Association, to supersede earthquakes, plagues, and fires. No. 18. New Company to protect subscribers against the imposition practised in Paris drawing-rooms, under the multifarious forms of artists' tickets, lotteries for the poor, and benevolent subscriptions. No. 33. Scientific Association for the application of the Lancasterian system to the education of silk-worms.

What a collection of bright and promising schemes! All of them will be tried by the Speculator, and will appear under the pompous title of *national;* and every one, successful or not, will produce some profit. There is no chance of loss to their promoter. If the undertaking succeed, he of course speculates on its success; if not, he will speculate on its ruin. The falling building is a matter of speculation quite as good as the edifice in course of erection; and the winding-up of a Company

may be just as profitable as its organization,—materials and rubbish may by some contrivance acquire a great value.

Perhaps the Speculator has a family,—it is not absolutely necessary; but if he have brothers, nephews, cousins, he must assist them. Some may die before him; and as he is the chief member and the protector of all the family, he has a right to expect that the bulk of the property will be left to him. How heartily would he then shed tears at the grave of the dear departed relative who had bequeathed to him the example of his virtues, together with more tangible testimonials of regard. Yielding at once to the inspiration of Heaven, and not inattentive to his worldly concerns, the Speculator takes the most active interest in all his relatives. One he places in the army, with advice, above all things, not to permit an equivocal word or the slightest offensive allusion to pass unnoticed. Such susceptibility is becoming in a French officer, and must be maintained, even at the cost of a few duels.—Another he persuades to undertake an adventurous voyage to some far distant land,—"India, Brazil, Turkey, China, Persia,—it matters not which. On the Continent, there is no scope for genius; Europe is crowded with eager aspirants after fortune: if you wish for more air, and a wider field to work out your conceptions, and to carve for yourself a distinguished career, go abroad."—The third has from his childhood a peculiar vocation that the Speculator discovered at once. Holy orders await him: his soul is prepared to taste the beatific joys of a religious life. The convent of La Trappe or the Chartreuse will afford him a foretaste of celestial happiness.—A different destiny is in store for the last: he is to enjoy all the pleasures of the world: he will sit down to splendid banquets, and taste the sweets of love: his kind protector has chaperoned him, and is proud of his success; but, unfortunately, his constitution proves weak, and unequal to such a gay life. In a short time, every one of these relatives so carefully brought up and so well placed out in the world by the Speculator, successively drops off. And what thinks the good man? "Look here," he will say, "I have supported all my family, and provided for all its members. God has seen fit to crown my efforts with success, and I have much to thank him for."

Of course the Speculator may marry, the same as any other member of the community, but love will not have the least interest in the matter. The marriage portion is the only point worthy of his consideration. Beauty has no attraction for him, except as a means of improving his fortune through the interest of some powerful patron, a great admirer of beauty. Should such a chance fall in his way, the Speculator will not shrink from it. He will not be particular about his bride's age—a rich wife is never too old; nay, her merit is in proportion to her years. How precious in his eyes is a dying angel, whose heavy cash-box will soon be in his possession! How dearly will he prize her memory when she has fulfilled her part of the contract, and left him her riches!—However, our Speculator will have no objection to marry even a child. The innocence of a young girl is so fascinating! It is understood that the young girl is a rich heiress; and it is indispensable that the property of the bride be in common. The Speculator knows the Civil Code by heart, and consequently cannot be ignorant that in that case the husband has uncontrolled right over the property.

Once married, the Speculator insures his wife's life; for should his better half, old or young, happen to die before him, the property left will be increased by the amount of the insurance; and no chance of profit is to be neglected. He also insures the lives of all his children. Poor little things! they have many enemies to contend with,—teething, small-pox, the measles, &c.; and if he lose any of them, he will receive some compensation in hard cash. On this principle, he finds that it might be profitable to have a numerous family, and in this respect, at least, he obeys the law of God. As to his own life, he sees no necessity to effect an insurance on that; for, in case of death, the amount of insurance would only benefit his heirs.

But the speculative mania is not only raging among the higher classes of society, among those accustomed to all the luxuries of life; it pervades every rank and all orders. The Speculator of the lower classes has a style peculiar to himself. He is on the look-out for all attractive dramatic performances; and when, after sufficient puffing, the day comes on, he buys beforehand as many tickets as he can, and disposes of them to those good folks who arrive at the theatre just at the regular hour for opening the doors, and find, to their great surprise, that all the tickets are gone. Lately, on the occasion of the public exhibition of manufactured goods and objects of art in Paris, a new contrivance was originated, and found to work admirably. A certain Speculator, knowing that several little pieces were in preparation at the minor theatres, in which the names of the successful contributors to the exhibition were to be mentioned, went round, authorized by the managers and authors, and canvassed the whole of the manufacturers—proposing to praise them and their goods at so much per line. The bait took, public praise being particularly acceptable to persons having goods to sell, and of course all parties benefited by the scheme. In the first place, the authors and managers, who could not fail to attract large audiences of spectators delighted to hear laudatory mention of their names; then came the manufacturers, for whom the thing served as a capital advertisement; and, lastly, the public, who, in addition to the gratification naturally afforded by the performance, were made acquainted with the wonders of modern industry that best deserved their preference. What a masterpiece of ingenuity!

Descending a little lower, we meet with the Speculators described by Vidocq*—light-fingered gentry, who haunt all crowds, and speculate boldly on the confusion that therein prevails. See yonder prince, attended by his retinue, repairing to some ceremony, as so many princes have done before him, and will do after. A gentleman among the spectators cannot forbear showing his loyalty by tears of joy: and while he is thus giving way to his feelings, the Speculator artfully takes possession of his watch. Handkerchiefs, pocket-books, jewels, change hands through his exertions with surprising rapidity. This kind of trade is the most profitable, inasmuch as nothing is given in return for what is taken from unwilling customers. Such proceedings, it is true, are not without danger, and Speculators in this line seldom fail to have their names entered in the list of convicts; but, be it said for the vindi-

* A celebrated convict, who, after his liberation, was employed in the Parisian Police, and has written a memoir of his life.

cation of public morals, that Speculators of the first water, who play very nearly the same tricks on a larger scale, may be seen driving in splendid carriages; and perhaps the day may come when they will condescend to append to their names the title of Peer of France, or acquire the honour of a seat in the Chamber of Deputies.

To sum up, the Speculator knows everything, sees everything, calculates everything, tries to profit by everything. He sees at a glance what advantages, with a little management, might accrue to him from a Republican association, a mixture of bitumens, the success of the little queens in both peninsulas, or a new process for destroying bugs. There is nothing that he cannot turn to some profitable end. He will pass with perfect composure over the ruin of twenty families, and enjoy the destruction of a whole set of buildings, provided he can devise some means of gratifying, by their restoration, his own rapacity. His neighbours' misfortunes make no impression on him, and he construes the tenth commandment as follows: Thou shalt covet and try by all means in thy power to obtain possession of thy neighbour's house, &c. If you express wonder at this strange perversion, he coolly whispers in your ear that his PRINCIPLES are supported by great authorities, and are recognized and practised in the very highest quarters.

His notions of good and evil require no lengthened explanation. Good, according to his vocabulary, is to be a capitalist: evil, to be penniless. Vice, is the deficiency of those qualifications to which the Speculator owes his rapidly-acquired fortune: virtue, is the art of obtaining what you covet by a series of artful tricks. And trade and commerce? These are simply an open struggle to seize one another's money—a war to the knife between parties possessed of property, and others coveting the same, which must be obtained at all hazards, but with the least possible scandal.

Never ask the Speculator what he thinks of piety and religious worship. *His* piety consists in a sacred love of all the luxuries of life; he worships nothing but the regulations of the Stock Exchange. Nothing is holy in his opinion but such articles of value as the Hebrews in the desert threw into the smelting-pot as materials for the Golden Calf.

What of his conscience? He has one, to be sure, but it is like a child's soap bubble. It might at first be taken for something; but in a moment it bursts, and no one can tell whence it came, and whither it is gone.

What shall we say of the Speculator's heart? It beats wholly for speculation; and feelings of love, sympathy, and honour are foreign to its nature. It was said of a great general, that he had a cannon-ball in the place of his heart: the vacuum in the Speculator's heart is filled with a roll of bank-notes.



THE ROMANTIC LADY.



THE UNAPPRECIATED LADY.

BY FREDERIC SOULIÉ.



N the UNAPPRECIATED GENIUS, we have to introduce to the reader a state of existence without precedent. The scholar of the Sorbonne, in the fifteenth century, is the picturesque ancestor of the Student; the Attorney is the direct descendant of the procureur, and has been most scrupulous in appropriating to the last farthing of the patrimony; the Dandy is only a transformation of the fop, the roué, the fashionable man, the marvellous, and the exquisite; and in the Academician of the present day, you may, notwithstanding very great alterations, recognize some features of the great writer of the seventeenth century;—but the Unappreciated Genius was unknown to our fathers, and is peculiar to the present age: it is, we might venture to say, the immediate produce of modern literary speculation. The Unappreciated Genius is not an exotic, like the Lion, the Tourist, or the Turfite; it belongs exclusively to France; it drags its languid existence among the people self-called the wittiest and *gayest* in the world.

If our neighbours the English were less busy working out our inventions, and converting them into sources of wealth,—if they had not still to deprive us of our trade in linen, and our silk manufactures,—and if they were not in constant search of an enormous lens to magnify the humid rays of their dim and pur-

blind sun, in order to ripen the grape, and transplant the vineyards of Bordeaux to the marshes of Scotland,—they might, perhaps, contend with us for the creation of Unappreciated Geniuses. In truth, the first germ of this at once real and fantastic being may be found in the poetry of Byron; but it must be confessed that it is the seed of a poetical flower which the French alone have gathered; and while the English, completely occupied by vulgar comforts and material interests, have been carrying out all sorts of inventions by M. Brunel, which we considered beneath our notice, we have most cleverly deprived them of this invaluable seed, to sow and cultivate on French soil.

It must be confessed that the culture has not been thrown away; the ground has been carefully furrowed by all romantic pens for the reception of the seed; rich manure has been applied, in the shape of dreamy poetry and consumptive novels. And how wonderful has proved the produce!—how widely has it been disseminated, and how deeply has it taken root! Thorns have, however, sprung up with the good seed, and will soon choke it. Let us endeavour to explain what an Unappreciated Genius is.

It is not at random that we compare the Unappreciated Genius to a flower, for all flowers are not beautiful and sweet-smelling. Like the flower, the Unappreciated Genius is of two sexes: there are male geniuses unappreciated, and female geniuses unappreciated.

The Unappreciated Gentleman is an extremely uncommon character, and never flourishes out of a literary sphere of life. To him the term "Unappreciated Genius" is peculiarly applicable, inasmuch as individuals of this species fancy that all that they think, all that they feel, and whatever they say, bears the stamp of "genius;" yet these gentlemen are not generally called by this their favourite name. Their fathers are wont to call them "lazy dogs," men of business say they are "fools," while pretty milliners occasionally confound them with "poets." In alluding to this rare plant, our only object has been to request our fellow-students in moral botany to bestow an attentive examination on any specimen of the kind that may chance to fall under their observation.

The following paper we propose to devote to the exclusive consideration of the female Unappreciated Genius, whose increasing numbers call for the notice of the philosophical critic.

The Unappreciated Lady is generally less attractive than singular in her outward appearance. She affects all obsolete and extraordinary forms and fashions. She may, however, be recognized by the following external signs:—Gown of pale sherry-coloured silk, of very old pattern, or of black and red mousseline-de-laine; chip bonnet, trimmed with velvet of decided colour; thread gloves; little or no collar, or pelerine; (she has a strong aversion to all articles of dress of *white* linen); a tortoiseshell eye-glass, suspended round her neck by a small hair chain; a crystal brooch, containing a lock of hair; a ring, also containing hair; hair bracelets, the clasps likewise inclosing hair. The Unappreciated Lady wears an abundance of hair everywhere but on her head: the little that her profound reveries have left her hangs in scanty ringlets down her hollow cheeks, and singularly long and scraggy neck. The skin about her eyes is of a sentimental and earthy yellow hue, not always completely washed by her tears; her hands are white, invariably stained

with ink; and her nails are seldom without a black border. Do not expect to find, in the Unappreciated Lady, that woman's perfume so familiar to Don Juan: it seems to us sensibly diminished, if not entirely destroyed, by the absence of perfume of any kind.

The Unappreciated Lady's genius, generally speaking, does not reach its full developement until late in life,—from thirty-six to forty. She is an autumnal flower, that not unfrequently survives the winter through, in spite of the bleak winds that whiten her corolla. Instances have, however, been known of Unappreciated Ladies flowering in the spring, at the age of eighteen or twenty; but these species could only have been obtained with the aid of artificial heat, in hot-houses where steam is superseded by novels and romances. Besides, they are almost sure to wither at their first invitation to a ball; and sudden transplantation into the unromantic garden of marriage completely changes their nature. Such is not the case with the Unappreciated Lady when she takes maturely her full developement: if, instead of being accidentally transported into the solid ground consecrated to the nuptial state, she goes there of her own accord, she is still more vivacious and devouring.

Before we enter upon the philosophical part of the analysis, it will be proper to speak of the localities most congenial to the Unappreciated Lady. She loves quiet rooms, remote from the front of the house, wherein the noise of the street can with difficulty penetrate, and whence her sighs may not be overheard. Day's "garish eye" is as insupportable to her as to the snapdragon; and, like that flower, the Unappreciated Lady hides her charms under a green veil, whenever by chance she finds herself exposed to the light; but she contrives to live constantly in-doors, in a kind of doubtful twilight, which she manages by means of Venetian blinds that are never drawn up, and of muslin curtains, which are the fitter for the purpose the more they are covered with dust.

In these mysterious retreats, there is always a great number of useless yet precious little articles, of which the Unappreciated Lady is alone able to explain the value. Sometimes a crucifix, often a pipe, here and there a withered nosegay, broken fans, and a little dagger, used for a paper-knife, though she never reads new books, but thumbed and torn volumes, which she hires from the circulating library, thereby encroaching upon the privileges of porteresses and duchesses.

Now that we have done our best to set before the reader some of the physical elements of the Unappreciated Lady's material existence, we may proceed to unfold the intimate secrets of her moral life. Here the field is immense in extent, and most various in its details. The Unappreciated Lady's thoughts soar from the lowest regions of unlawful love to the most ethereal elevations of Platonic affection; and, in this flight out of sight, every movement is a mystery, every effort is a grief, every word is a problem, every aspiration a boundless wish, every sigh implies a secret feeling.

The Unappreciated Lady's history, previous to her attaining maturity, is, like her language, surrounded by an unfathomable mystery. She, on all occasions, sums it up in these words:—"I HAVE SUFFERED MUCH!" As to the nature of her great sufferings, it is a secret that one never learns, except through the indiscretion of her medical attendant, or perchance from an old number of the *Gazette des Tribunaux*. The Unappreciated Lady may be either maid, wife, or widow; but

whatever may be her condition, her past life has always been marked by one, often two, sometimes four or five, great misfortunes, which weigh heavily on her existence.

Single, the Unappreciated Lady is the scourge of old bachelors, who, in their younger days, have led a gay life. When age has exhausted their strength, being too old to seek a safe refuge in marriage, they look at least for repose in an alliance where they will bring the comforts of fortune, and expect in return tender nursing. They are wont to believe that they have found a suitable companion in selecting a lady past the grand climacteric, but whose languishing modesty still has attractions. They know what construction to put on her bemoanings for her former sufferings; and these old libertines, whose lives have been spent in leading youth and innocence astray, do not hesitate to make allowance for errors in which they themselves may have been accomplices. They imprudently imagine that the poor old maids only seek repose from their misfortunes, as they from their pleasures; and, deceived by an admirable semblance of resignation, they open their doors to receive their wily partners. From this day commences, between the old invalid and his younger helpmate, a struggle in which the unhappy wretch will be made to undergo all sorts of tortures, until he sinks, and finally expires.

The Unappreciated Lady will at first gradually insinuate, and maintain with the boldest perseverance, that her past life has been as pure as a vestal's, and that she has been the victim of calumny. The old gentleman, who has not even strength enough to argue with her, tacitly grants her this satisfaction; for she is a thoughtful, kind, and attentive nurse. Little by little, the angelic virtue of the exemplary companion is acknowledged as an established and incontestible fact by everybody, even by a few friends who are unwilling to cross a poor old valetudinarian. Without ceasing to be kind and attentive, she next becomes rather tyrannical, and wants to regulate the old libertine's life. How can he refuse this control to one who has so well regulated her own? Her attentions still continue, but not unconditionally; she begins to be rather exacting; the old man yields once, and again; at last he one day hazards an observation; now the Unappreciated Lady flies into a passion, and her aroused indignation finds vent in no measured terms:—"To have devoted a noble heart to a pious duty, and to receive nothing in return but base ingratitude! Alas! misfortunes have been my lot hitherto, and will attend me to my grave." If the irascible old man's temper get the better of him, and if he venture to question his partner's pretended misfortunes, then the Unappreciated Lady's triumph is at hand. "Time has been, when he did not speak in this strain; once, he was not unable to APPRECIATE the proud and fervent heart that was surrendered to him. But no: he never APPRECIATED the treasure of virtue that God has sent him. How, alas! should it be otherwise with one whose life has been spent in the company of women of bad character,—women whose name she should blush to pronounce!" Should the old man's pride, wounded by such a tirade, induce him to defend his agreeable reminiscences, and hazard a reply, she at once holds her peace; she assumes an affected resignation, and a cold, severe, and stern dignity.

Hence, the old man gets an indifferent breakfast, and a bad dinner; nothing is ready for him; his mixture, his draught, his barley-water, his newspaper, his footstool (he has a gouty foot), and his accustomed auditor to hear him,—none are at hand. He struggles, summons his courage, and tries to be independent; and he

fails: he now resigns himself, calls his tormentor to his bedside, and begs her pardon; he had not APPRECIATED her. She is thus acknowledged to have been UNAPPRECIATED. From this moment, the unhappy old man becomes his companion's prey, like a lamb in the talons of an eagle; from this moment, she may have a lover, who will drink the old man's wine, dine at his table, take snuff with him,—if, indeed, he does not take his snuff-box. He will be called a brother-in-law, a cousin, a nephew, or whatever you please; but he will at any rate be a member of this virtuous family, of which the Unappreciated Lady is the fairest ornament. Her family are introduced,—a numerous family, too; cousins succeed cousins, and sometimes they bring their wives; the family of the daily declining old man are dislodged, to make room for the ignoble intruders. The sounds of feasting and merry-making reach the deserted master of the house on his sick-bed. He fumes, he rings; his evil genius appears, in high dudgeon. "What is the matter now? What do you want?" "I fancied, my dear, that I heard—it seemed,"—"What?" He stammers out his complaint. If he has strength enough left to rise, and verify his doubts, she bursts into tears, and laments, and becomes indignant. Is he too ill to stir?—then she threatens to leave him, and be no longer unappreciated. Unappreciated!—the everlasting, all-powerful word; and, be it uttered with threats or with tears, the unhappy victim invariably yields: the word is a talisman. This lasts till the old man dies, and the Unappreciated Lady inherits his property, when she either turns religious, and marries a churchwarden, or opens a boarding-house or a circulating library,—most commonly the latter.

Let us turn to a more distinguished species. The Unappreciated Widow is the caterpillar of young men entering the world: the simplest, the handsomest, the most affectionate, are her common prey. She has generally a tolerable income,—a life annuity of a few thousand francs, she contrived to secure by her first marriage. To this variety especially belongs the romantic science of dim twilight apartments. We could name more than one who keep floating wicks burning in porcelain lamps all day. It was one of those Unappreciated Widows who replied to the inquiry of one of her friends, who found her at noon reclining on her sofa, by the dim light of a night-lamp,—"Are you ill, my dear?" "No: I expect *him*."

Who could be the unlucky victim? Poor child! pray the gods that you may fall in love rather with an apple-woman than with an Unappreciated Lady! The moment an unfortunate young man, about to enter life, is espied by one of these vampires, in a corner of the drawing-room in which he has incautiously been left alone, the reptile casts a spell upon him, gently approaches his seat, fascinates him with her looks, and already absorbs him in her imagination. She turns to account any trifling incident: she accidentally drops her pocket-handkerchief, which the ill-starred young man picks up, and politely restores. The lady enters into conversation with him, and speedily becomes acquainted with his habits, his tastes, and his avocations. The young man must have some favourite predilection. He has recently left college, where everything is taught; he has no doubt learnt a thing or two; he either thrums on the piano, or daubs a little in water-colours, or scribbles nonsense in halting verse. On whatever subject he may speak, she dreams of nothing else. She doats on music; or has an album, for which she must have a drawing, or "stanzas." The young man cannot refuse such a trifle. He will

be kind enough to visit the recluse in her humble hermitage, where she will show him all her treasures of poetry; he will certainly be enchanted with them, for his noble sentiments and refined taste are legible in his features. Dear boy! his vanity is flattered, and he fancies that he is formed to love now what at college he cordially detested. He accepts the lady's invitation, and actually goes to see her.

The den opens to receive him, and is immediately closed. A dim religious light prevails in this sanctuary, and the air is redolent of the perfume of oriental pastiles. He finds the lady wrapped in a long white peignoir, with jet bracelets and necklace. She is unwell, and low-spirited; and her inexperienced visitor condoles with and pities her.

"How kind this is of you!" ejaculates the Lady, accompanying her words with a gentle pressure of the hand. "Your goodness quite overpowers me."

If the young man be quite a novice, he imagines he has made a conquest; he becomes bold, and determines to turn his good fortune to account; the Lady yields, and threatens never to survive. If (and there is only this alternative) he have a presentiment of his danger, and attempt to effect a timely retreat, the Unappreciated Lady takes care to render escape impossible. She suddenly goes into hysterics; the young man is obliged to afford her some assistance. A lady, of course, cannot be held accountable for what she does in hysterics; and is unconscious where she clings for support. Sometimes it is to her visitor's neck; and as she is not downright ugly, the young man's eighteen years of age assist her materially to carry out her plan.

From that day, the unfortunate youth is ruined; he belongs to her, body and soul. A bright future at last opens to her, after so many years of grief and misery. From the sudden and irresistible transports that overwhelm her, she believes that she has at last found the being of whom she so long dreamed in her days of mental agony. The young man believes all this; he feels that he is adored, and, for a week or two, he mistakes vanity for love. Presently the scene changes. It is not he who has been seduced; *he* has treacherously betrayed a too-confiding woman; and on this pretext she is jealous and exacting,—all his life must be entirely devoted to her. He tries to shake off the yoke, and asks for a little liberty; and now the Unappreciated Lady stands confessed. It would be strange indeed, if, on the day of his first visit, the imprudent young man had not dropped a phrase or two that politeness rendered imperative to a lady in his arms, heaping reproaches on herself for her imprudence. The young man, to comfort her, had vowed eternal affection. On this ground hinge all the Unappreciated Lady's complaints: she is a victim.

The real victim, wanting yet the requisite courage to go the length of an open rupture, writes a letter, in which he flatters himself he has hit upon an unanswerable pretext. He sends it one evening by his porter, goes to bed, and sleeps. On awakening the next morning, with a vague sentiment of recovered liberty, he beholds, at the foot of his bed, a female face bathed in tears. The young man's porter had given the key of his little apartment to the Lady, who had applied for it,—not that the porter is not a man of the strictest morality, but the Unappreciated Lady looked so much like an aunt, that he thought it his duty to give admittance to a discreet matron, who doubtless came to read a lecture to his young lodger, who was beginning to run a little wild.

Surprised in bed, the confused young man stammers out a clumsy explanation. He confesses to having been led astray by false friends, and again falls into the abyss from which he vainly tried to extricate himself. Henceforth his life becomes a horrible punishment. Every morning brings him letters, every evening has its rendezvous. He answers not the letters, and fails to keep the appointments. In happy mood, he goes to dine at the Café Douix; he takes a seat near a window; he converses and laughs, and drinks freely. Suddenly his hilarity disappears, and a cloud settles on his features; he beholds the Unappreciated Lady through the window, in a hackney-coach, stopped opposite the café; she looks angry and exasperated; methinks he sees her rush up stairs, make a scene, and ruin him by making him look ridiculous in the eyes of his friends. He makes an excuse to leave the table, descends into the street, and, to get rid of the Lady, promises all that she requires. He returns to his companions, but his appetite has fled; his dinner disagrees with him, and he has an attack of indigestion. When he reaches his lodgings, there she is, awaiting his return; and he is obliged to thank her for her kind attention.

But ten volumes would be hardly sufficient to describe all the miseries, all the accidents, of such a story; the threats of suicide proffered by the Unappreciated Lady; her eternal complaints for all the sacrifices she has made at the shrine of love; all the phantasma of false and exaggerated sentiments. This may perhaps last six months, at the expiration of which the desperate young man flies from Paris, or perhaps emigrates. To Unappreciated Ladies, other women are indebted for seared hearts of sceptics incapable of affection,—men who brutalize the most delicate sentiments,—who sneer at the tenderest affections, and who have originated the phrase, "She died of love and of consumption."

However despicable may be the Unappreciated Lady as a spinster, however dangerous as a widow, these are nothing in comparison with the Unappreciated Married Lady. Various are the ways by which she enters the honourable state of matrimony. Sometimes she is under the influence of that kind of mental disease that constitutes the Unappreciated Genius. In such a case, it is generally a country school teacher, who marries a widowed wine-merchant desirous of bestowing a second mother on his daughters. The good-tempered old gentleman continues to enjoy his dinner and his wine, and to indulge in his accustomed hearty laugh, while his lady preserves the contemptuous silence of conscious superiority, scarcely touching food, replying to her husband in monosyllables, and returning, with frigid dignity, the worthy man's affectionate caresses. He plays at piquet, while she reads Lamartine; and he soundly sleeps, while she lies awake by his side. It is needless to say to what such an union leads.

Perhaps the Unappreciated Lady marries with the sincere wish of becoming a good wife; and it may happen that her mind becomes tainted by the contagious example of some acquaintance, or the perusal of romantic books. In such a case her morbid disposition is of the most dangerous nature. She has to avenge herself for her past life, thrown away; her husband is accountable to her for all the ineffable joys of a heavenly love, which she has vainly expected from him; and she inflicts upon him a life of unmitigated misery. A clerk in a government office, for instance, who is obliged to leave his wife to herself all day, is particularly liable to the curse of an

Unappreciated Lady. In his absence, everything finds entrance into his house,—female friends, bad books, pernicious consolations, and all. The evil grows unchecked, until it reaches such an height that it causes violent quarrels, which are followed by open and scandalous ruptures.

Again, the husband may knowingly accept the Unappreciated Lady for what she is, for the sake of her money. Then he, of all the slaves in the world, is the most insulted, despised, abused, and vilified. He is allowed neither to have an opinion of his own, nor to go out and return home when he pleases, nor to be indifferent or attentive; and, notwithstanding all this, he is accused of being the most barbarous and tyrannical of husbands. He is, alas! unable to understand a delicate female mind; he does not comprehend those secret feelings upon which he tramples every instant; he has destroyed the illusions of a too-confident heart; and his vulgar life weighs heavily on the ethereal existence of his unappreciated wife. For the unfortunate husband of such a wife, the torture is renewed every day, every hour, every instant. When alone with her, she falls into a reverie; at his first question, she contemptuously turns away her head; why does he disturb her meditations,—he who is unable to appreciate them? If he insist, the Lady flies into a passion. The Visigoth makes a point of brutally wounding her feelings; and he will not even allow her to take refuge in silence. Does he invite a few friends to dinner?—She wraps herself up in the most chilling reserve; and when he asks her to serve the custards, she wipes away a tear, affects a forced and gloomy smile, and stains the table-cloth. The dinner passes off in constraint, and every one present is uncomfortable. When the guests are departed, the husband asks for an explanation, which invariably ends by hysterics, with the most elegant variety of the genus Unappreciated Lady. This lasts till the miserable husband obtains a divorce, demanded by the wife for grievous bodily harm received at the hands of her husband, but granted to the latter on the ground of criminal conversation between his Lady and her cousin.

At last, having buried her old bachelor, or ruined her last young man, or abandoned her husband, the Unappreciated Lady one day writes a letter in the following fashion, to any author whose address she happens to know:—

"Sir,—You who know so well how to describe the griefs of the female mind will understand me. I have suffered much; and perhaps the details of my SORROWS, traced by your brilliant pen, might interest your readers. If you should feel disposed to receive the melancholy outpourings of a heart bereft of all hope in this world, pray drop a line to A. L., Post-office, Rue ———."

The author, a merry dog, who loves a joke, and whistles the Cachuca as he corrects his proofs, reads the letter, twists it up, and makes use of it to light his cigar; and, taking a walk in his little garden, invents the plot of a very pathetic feuilleton.

The (still Unappreciated) Lady repairs to the Post-office eight days running. On the eighth, her letter remaining unanswered, she cries, as she kindles her fire, "Unappreciated I have lived, and Unappreciated I will die!" And, having taken her breakfast, she prepares to roast a leg of mutton for dinner. Alas! poor Unappreciated Lady!



THE DUNES.



THE USHER.*

BY EUGENE NYON.



S there a man in France, however bygone may be his schoolboy days, who does not look back with pleasure upon that age when a holyday formed all his joy —when an "imposition," or an order to be "kept in," were sources of bitter grief and abundant tears? Is there a man who would not smile to think of the dread inspired in his mind by that "merciless tyrant," that "unjust despot," that "tiger, thirsting for school-boy punishments," called "an Usher."

The Usher! Unhappy man! Who is there, when he has once left school, who does not feel a sentiment of commiseration arise within him in favour of this unfortunate pedagogue? Who is there who does not accuse himself of injustice, when he calls to mind the injurious epithets of various kinds which he has bestowed upon this inflexible Argus, from the ancient denomination of "*Chien de cour*," to the more modern contemptuous expression of "*Pion?*"† For my own part, I feel the liveliest compassion for him, and I pity his lot, even more than that of a corporal of the National Guard in the full enjoyment of his rank.

Should the reasons of my intense pity for "the Usher" not be understood, it is only necessary to cast a glance over his daily life. After going to bed every evening,

* The Usher in French schools *(Maitre d'Etudes)* is not employed to teach, but solely to superintend the conduct of the boys.

† Literally, a pawn at chess; anything mean, to be pushed about at will; "a sneak."

" with the cocks and hens,"—a common expression, but a perfectly correct one—like " shrill chanticleer," he is the first in the house the following morning, with his early crow of " Come! get up! the bell has rung." With that he enters upon his functions, and his daily work begins. The boys get up, and so does he: the boys go down, and so does he: the boys wash and brush themselves, and the Usher superintends the operation—for the Usher is supposed to have done " all that sort of thing" before his *élèves*: the boys enter the school-room: and there his shrill voice screams the first " Silence!" of the day. Woe to him who hears not the warning! Woe to him who says a " good morning" to his neighbour, or murmurs a regret for the bed he has left. Let the ill-advised urchin only whisper—only move his lips even, the Usher is sure to hear him, for his well-practised ear is sharp; and he proportions his vengeance to all the ennui which he is about to undergo throughout the livelong day. Once perched upon his stool, he is no longer a man—he is no longer a simple mortal—he is " an Usher." His babbling crew of young scapegraces must then mind what they are about. During the two long hours which ensue, he has nothing else to do but to watch and spy, to repeat the eternal " silence," or threaten the " imposition," of classic notoriety. Two long hours of such employment, and you suppose he is not to be pitied;—two long hours like a poacher on the look-out to bring down a word on the wing, or snare a furtive wink! At last the school-bell rings. Great is the influence of that bell upon the Usher's existence. It governs every action of his daily life. When it rings for meals, he must be hungry, whether he will or no—for going out, he must necessarily take an airing—for school-hours, he must as necessarily come in again—for getting up in the morning, he must have no inclination to sleep on—for going to bed at night, he must prepare to close his eyes. Were he in the liveliest possible humour, with a head full of bright ideas—a most rare occurrence,—he has the only alternative left him of sleep or reflection, for, the last tingle of the bell once heard, every candle must be extinguished. Slave of a bell! Such is his destiny.

This time, however, it sounds his hour of liberty. He is free—free for an hour and a half. Oh! during all that lapse of time he is his own master; no restraint; no superior power weighs upon him. He shakes his wings and takes his flight. No one can hinder his going where he will. Paris, or the suburbs,—Versailles, or Saint Germain,—Corbeil, or Melun: he has a right to visit any place he likes: no one can oppose him, provided that he does not go beyond the stipulated time; provided only, that at the expiration of the hour and a half allotted him for becoming once more " a man," neither sooner or later, but at the very hour fixed, he is again to be found at his post. What an admirable privilege! what independence! As common sense, however, is sufficient to make him comprehend that any extensive excursion would seduce him into a want of punctuality, he does not leave the capital. As a general resource, the *café* opens its doors, and the newspaper its columns, before him: he reads the politics of the day, and learns by heart some of the reflections of " the leader," in order to make use of them at need. Should he, however, be one of the rare instances of an Usher inclined to corpulency, whose doctor has ordered him to take exercise, he then employs his poor legs, during his hour and a half, in trotting up and down all the streets of Paris, at such a pace, that he returns to the school in a most salutary state of perspiration. Or should it

happen, that any requited or unrequited passion has gained possession of his heart —and the fact may be easily perceived by the impatience with which he awaits the signal of his independence, and the inconceivable rapidity with which he disappears the moment he becomes his own master, he then flies to the feet of his cruel beauty, whose heart is more or less subdued; but time, more cruel still than she, runs on without pity for his sufferings; and the hour startles him in the midst of a tender protestation, or an animated dispute, according to the nature of his feelings. The unhappy lover is confused, stops short, stammers, and puts off to the morrow the conclusion of his sonnet or his philippic, for from that moment he is no longer a man—he returns to his state of "Usher." He once more assumes his throne in his scholastic prison, awaiting the appointed times when he has to quit the school-room for the dining-hall, the dining-hall for the play-ground, and the play-ground for the school-room again, until the general dormitory arrives at last to offer him a chance of repose, and oblivion of the regular and monotonous life which is to re-commence on the morrow.

False, indeed, in the Usher's case, is the saying, "*Les jours se suivent et ne se ressemblent pas.*" His days follow one upon another, and never change. What he did yesterday he does again to-day: what he did to-day he will do again to-morrow, unless that morrow be a Thursday. The Thursday is a holyday; but never once suppose that it is a happy day to him. He curses the Thursday no less than the other days of the week, including the Sundays, when he is "on guard." He has the permission, it is true, to walk out for three whole hours; but he is fettered in by a long chain of boys—a weary, heavy chain, from which there is no release, and which he has to drag about with him during the whole walk, and bring home again "in all its native purity." Every fortnight, however, recurs a bright day in his existence—a Sunday. Ever since the preceding Thursday, he never ceases to talk of the Sunday when "he has leave out." Heaven only knows the innumerable projects that he forms for that thrice-happy day. During the summer, he dreams of country excursions, water parties, and ices at Tortoni's; during the winter, of copious and nutritious dinners, conquests of sundry hearts, and the play. At length the long-desired Sunday arrives. He is up and dressed at early dawn, for he is not willing to lose a single hour of his day. While at church with the boys, the mass appears to him interminable; and he is guilty of a thousand proofs of wandering attention during the service, at the risk of scandalising his hopeful pupils. His exclusive occupation is the consideration whether it will be fine, or whether it will rain. At last he quits the house, and by eight o'clock in the morning is wandering about "upon town." Breakfast—dinner—a lounge at his ease—all his dreams are realized, even to the play. But, alas! in the midst of one of Achard's gayest songs, at the Théâtre du Palais Royal, or one of Saint Ernest's most melodramatic declamations, at the "Ambigu;" at the very moment when the poor Usher's lungs are merrily dilated by the broad jokes of the vaudeville, or his eyes streaming with tears at some admirable situation of the "effective drama" he is witnessing, he pulls out his watch—it is half-after nine! He has to bid adieu to vaudeville and melodrama, to Achard and Saint Ernest, and quit all, under the penalty of being obliged to sleep in the street, and losing his place. The rules of the school are strict. At ten o'clock the doors are locked, bolted, and barred. He is forced to

abandon his pleasure, contrive to dispose of his check advantageously, and run home to present his neck to the collar which is again to tighten round him, until another fortnight has expired.

As a recompence for the exactitude with which he performs all his agreeable functions, the Usher is gratified with "food of the most abundant and salutary description," (according to the style of the school circulars); sleeps upon an elevated bed; and has the advantage of a coal fire and the school-room lamps. He is paid the monthly sum of forty or fifty francs, which, without pity for his creditors, he spends upon his pleasure of every kind, and consecrates to the embellishment of his existence during the two days per month which are his own.

To pass one's days among a tribe of troublesome boys, stuck up, as it were, as a scarecrow, to be a mere instrument for imposing silence,—can that be called life? The master complains; but he communicates his knowledge, and labours towards the improvement of his pupils; the under-master finds a pleasure in the advancement of those under his immediate care. They have a principle of action—an end and aim—a motive; the poor Usher has none; his condition is of an entirely passive nature, so passive, indeed, that I wonder legislators, in making additions to the punishments in our penal codes, in inflicting imprisonment, solitary confinement, and the galleys, have never admitted among the number the functions of an Usher "for life." Few, I opine, would ever be found guilty of a crime which would lead to so cruel a condemnation.

And yet there are not wanting those who are desirous of the situation. There are many causes, however, which may drive a man to this desperate resolution—this sort of moral suicide.

When, after having vainly attempted to find a landing-place in every haven; vainly knocked at every door; vainly tried to follow every path; after having been by turns merchant, clerk, soldier, surgeon-dentist, Jack-of-all-trades, and Heaven knows what besides, a man finds that he succeeds in nothing; that every thing he undertakes fails; that his own incapacity, in fact, has rendered every haven inaccesible, closed every door, and stopped up every path; in a word, when not a single chance of success in anything whatever remains, he then turns "Usher." When a man, whose younger days were all at once enriched by a paternal heritage, and who, careless of the future, and blinded by the enjoyment of the present, has squandered everything—fortune, health, youth, and happiness—is at last overwhelmed by despair, and contemplates putting an end to his existence—at the moment of accomplishing the fatal act, may-be he hesitates: an idea crosses his mind, and he reflects that, short of suicide, another last chance remains; he catches at the saving clause with eagerness; he follows this instinct of self-preservation; and ——he turns "Usher."

There are others, it is true, whom neither incapacity nor distress has driven to this last extremity—who have been simply induced by motives of reason. Some have quitted their distant province to seek in Paris an honourable position in the world, ambitious of a lawyer's eloquence, or a doctor's science; and, poor as they are studious, stand in need of a situation, which enables them to live for a time, and yet permits them to give themselves up to their studies. Others there are who aim direct at the professor's toga, or dream of nothing but the doctor's ermined

gown, and who make use of this lowest of all positions as a stepping-stone, from which to climb upwards in university distinctions. But such as these form a class apart: to them "the profession" is not a track without an issue—a blind alley, as it were—where they are shut in for life. They have an idea to follow up—an end in view, towards which they march on incessantly—a career and destiny.

Each different Usher, generally speaking, displays in the midst of the boys whose *surveillance* he undertakes, a different temper. All alike strive to appear of consequence in the eyes of the young crew; but they take their measures very differently. He of acknowledged incapacity never ceases to extol his own important qualities. According to his own account, he was destined for great things, and his misfortunes were the result of a concourse of the most extraordinary circumstances. Man's injustice, the caprice of fortune, fatality, are all accused in turn of being causes of his ruined prospects; for he takes pretty good care not to take into account his own want of merit, which alone reduced him to his present extremity. He is generally dull, heavy, and apathetic, and would, if he dare, take a daily nap in his chair: he has no force to control the unruly, no angry energy to rouse the lazy; and ends by avowing himself vanquished in the struggle, which invariably takes place between master and pupil, to know which of the two shall domineer over the other. The unhappy wight is incessantly "quizzed" by the boys, and "snubbed" by the masters. He is the butt of all the school-boy tricks of a pack of merciless young tyrants. "I bet you," cries one, "that I hit him with my ball right in the middle of his back." "That you can't," replies another, "and I bet you three sheets of foolscap that you don't." The ball is thrown with all possible force, and hits the mark exactly. "Oh! it wasn't done o' purpose," cries the young urchin, "it was that other chap that I wanted to hit, and he ducked." He then turns his back to laugh in his sleeve, and the poor man puts up with the excuse.

Let him once be the victim of one of these lively little jests without punishing the insult, and never a day passes without a whole torrent of practical jokes being showered down upon him. The chopped horsehair in his bed, the glass of water emptied into his coat-pocket, and the bread-bullets flung at his spectacles, are all borne without a murmur. It must not be supposed either that the boys owe him the least thanks for his forbearance: if ever it comes to a rebellion, the biggest dictionaries and the heaviest inkstands are sure to fly at his head. I say nothing either of the infinite quantity of caricatures chalked by these unfledged Daumiers* on the walls, which all bear an acknowledged resemblance to the original, although sometimes embellished by a fine, pimpled nose, and sometimes by an addition to the charms of the physiognomy in the shape of a pipe—the whole illustrated by the characteristic inscription of *"Oh! ce cadet-là, quel pif qu'il a!"*† And thus, a constant butt to raillery or reproach, he passes through five or six different schools in the course of the year, and drags on his miserable existence, until he arrives at the poor shed of the street-scrivener, which he only leaves to die at some old man's hospital, if he has patronage enough to gain admittance.

This species of the Usher may be easily recognized by his dress. He almost invariably wears a coat which once was black, but whose collar and sleeves are now

* A well-known French caricaturist of the day.

† Anglicè: "There's a queer phiz!—What a rum snout that chap has got!"

of a nature to put a bears'-grease vendor to the blush: and it is rare indeed that the acquired shape of his bangled hat does not form a perfect union with his coat. He adorns himself with his outer coating of dirt upon the principle of the Grecian Sage with his ragged mantle, and assumes all the airs of a philosopher. Once a year, it may be, he complains of the ancientness of his attire—on the day of the Head Master's *fête*. A ball is given, and he is invited: but after having in vain trimmed his coat in every possible way, he finds himself compelled to refuse the invitation, and retire to the dormitory, where the noise of the ball still pursues him, and he takes his part in the festivities by passing a sleepless night.

Very different from his brother usher is our ruined gentleman. He still follows the fashions, at his tailor's expense, and runs into debt in order not to lose the habit of it. His past fortunes serve to give him a certain position in the eyes of his *élèves*. His temper is variable: he is either too easy or too severe; he either never punishes at all, or strikes hard enough to cripple his victim; and the cause of his capricious rage might very generally be found in the comparisons daily forced upon the unhappy wretch between his brilliant days gone by and his present situation. He is a dangerous person, and ought to be carefully avoided.

But, after all, such ushers as these are mere vulgar beings, the veriest plebeians of the trade:—a fig for them all! we have had enough of them. There is one alone who deserves all our admiration—our utmost homage—all that respectful attention which is due to things rare and precious. He is grand—he is noble—he is sacred among ushers! This Usher of ushers is the usher "by vocation." All honour be paid to him! The species is rare, but it *does* exist.

Examine, above all, that serious and imperturbable expression of face—that eagle-eye—that sedate carriage: then listen to that formal, monstrous, cavernous voice. What pains that voice has cost him! In how many a rude trial has his throat been exercised in order to acquire that imposing tone! Long has been the course of deep study which has enabled him to arrive at so marvellous a pitch of perfection. And that deportment! To suppose that it belongs to him naturally, would be to fall into a grievous error. Like his voice, his carriage is the result of long and painful study. And that eagle-look!—that serious face! Never let it be presumed that they either belong to his natural being. Be assured that, when he likes, he has eyes without a ray of expression, and a face as insignificant as you please. No! there is all the merit—there the art—there the genius of the man. All that has been acquired by genius and labour—created by himself!

As soon as the great man enters his school-room, the clamorous voice of play is ceased on a sudden—every noise is smothered—every whisper hushed. In order to obtain this prompt and instantaneous calm, he has not had a single word to utter—not the very smallest "Silence," to intimidate the noisy crowd—nothing: his simple presence has sufficed. Great, however, is his satisfaction at the effect produced, as he seats himself proudly on his stool. These are the triumphs of his life—his happiness—his glory, and he is half wild with delight. Enamoured of the power of his sway, and sure of his influence, he enjoys to put it to the proof. At the moment when it is least expected, he quits his stool, and goes out, leaving the school-room to itself and his place unoccupied: he withdraws himself far enough off not to be seen, but near enough to hear. It is then that he experiences his

liveliest pleasure, and quaffs intoxicating draughts of joy; for the same silence pervades the school-room, and not a word—not a whisper is heard. His spirit still hovers over the spot he has just left. So happy is he at such moments, that were he offered a fortune, an empire, a popedom, he would repulse the offer far behind him, and reply with noble pride, "Have I not my school-room?"

Very generally, the usher in question, in the midst of his childhood's dreams and his ambitious hopes of youth, has allowed a vague vision of epaulets to come across his inclinations; and when, at thirty years of age, he becomes usher, his dreams are in part realised—his ambitious aspirations well nigh gratified. He has the command of a little troop who obey his will: he acts the general, and is happy. His very expressions bear the impress of his early ideas, and he gives a military turn to all his orders. When the bell announces the hour for going out, he shouts, "To horse! the trumpet sounds!" and when he is about to punish a boy, he orders him "into military arrest." It is generally the case also, that in thus giving a military stamp to all his actions, he does not forget the characteristic of a minute attention to cleanliness: he falls furiously foul of an ill-blacked shoe, and grants no pardon to a grease-spot: and, to his honour be it said, it is very rare that he does not set the example to his little troop.

The Usher "by vocation," on account of his extreme rarity, as well as his scrupulous exactitude in the performance of his duties, is eagerly hunted up by the masters of "Establishments for Young Gentlemen." He knows it well, for he has an inward consciousness of his genius, and a conviction of his own importance. And is it not natural enough? Unfortunately, his conversation smacks strongly of this good opinion of his own person, and has a constant tendency to conceit. There is one circumstance also which wounds his feelings and irritates him much—the only one, in fact, belonging to his condition which he refuses to acknowledge—and that is the name attached to it. Usher! ill-sounding title—ignoble expression! The very word rouses his indignation; and be it not for a moment supposed that when he writes into the country, he ever adds to his name, by way of title, a denomination so despicable in his own eyes. No! he signs his name, "Member of the University of Paris,"—a high-sounding qualification! Such a respectable title as that cannot fail of producing a marvellous effect upon his provincial friends and country cousins. However, as the title is somewhat too general, his vanity has contrived to invent others; and when asked what he is, he replies, "Prefect of a Classical Institution," or "Scholastic Censor."

The Usher "by vocation" has parts of his character which do not belong to this rare species alone, but to the whole race of Ushers; and among these distinctive marks, the most so perhaps is his dry and meagre form. The Usher is generally thin; a circumstance which may be attributed either to the continual fits of irritability to which he is exposed, or to the "food of the most abundant and salutary description" already alluded to, in which he indulges. His high cheekbones and skinny hands are browned like a meershaum pipe by exposure to the playground sun; and ever since the Revolution of 1830 has proclaimed in France the supremacy of the *moustache*, he has become one of the most devoted admirers of that appendage. He never fails of adding this personal adornment to the whiskers already of long standing; and so proud is he of it, that it might be said with truth, that

"were the moustachio banished from the earth, you would still find it on the Usher's lip." His carriage is stiff and awkward; and he has a *je ne sçais quoi* in his whole appearance that would stamp him "Usher," as well in the most brilliant attire as in his shabby coat.

Behold him in the exercise of his functions! His head is covered with a black cloth skullcap, or a sort of travelling cap, which serves him till it drops in pieces. He wears a long great-coat, with the indispensable accessories of a pocket on each side, into which he has the habit of thrusting his hands; and his trowsers, almost invariably of an original black, but now grey in appearance and destitute of any species of strap, make vain attempts to reach a pair of large, square-made, dusty boots.

After the same fashion as this species of professional costume, the Usher has adopted a sort of school-room jargon, which has passed traditionally from mouth to mouth, and which, "revised, corrected, and with considerable additions," has ended by forming a generally-established formulary. Heaven only knows the prodigious quantity of imitations of the famous "*Quos ego*" which he has made, in order to call his boys to order. "The first boy I hear ——" and there he stops, sure of his effect. "A hundred lines ——" and he names no names; so that by means of thus adroitly stopping short, every boy fancies the dreaded hundred lines hanging over his own head.

There is one certain and undeniable fact—one of those truths which have all the force of established law,—and that is, that "the Usher" is the most susceptible being imaginable. Heaven preserve you from a conversation with an Usher! You must weigh your every sentence, watch over every stray expression, and guard against any possible hidden signification in every word you say, for fear of wounding his feelings. His susceptibility is ever on the *qui vive*, and will call you to account for every sentence, every expression, every word. Tell him, for instance, when he utters his critical anathema against some petty grammatical error in any well-known author of the day, that there are others who think the writer a man of talent, and he will reply with bitterness, that "he understands you perfectly well;—that you mean to say he is incapable of judging, but that he does not care for that—he thinks the man a blockhead all the same." Take care, then, what you are about, and by paying all due attention to say nothing that he can possibly take up, you may enjoy the charms of his conversation as long as you like, and that without the smallest retribution.

It often happens that the Usher is harsh and haughty towards the servants. But is that to be wondered at? In the established hierarchy of schools, the Usher occupies the lowest grade; and the least to be expected is, that he should use his authority upon the only inferiors he has. And he uses it with prodigality, like a man who pays himself off with interest.

In spite of that, however, and on account of his many private good qualities, I declare without scruple that "the Usher" excites my liveliest sympathies, and I witness with pleasure the daily amelioration in his position—an amelioration to be attributed to the pains taken by the masters of Establishments for the Education of Youth to exclude men of incapacity from among so useful a class of beings. Let it be hoped that such as they will soon but seldom reappear, and finally be utterly blotted out, to the honour and glory of so respectable a portion of society.



THE CHARWOMAN.



THE CHARWOMAN.*

BY CHARLES ROUGET.



THE honest woman who humbly devotes the better half of her life to the careful rearing and education of her children; who herself measures, before putting into other hands, the linen destined for her lord and master's new shirts; who possesses an invaluable receipt for currant jelly or apricot marmalade; who would regard as an unpardonable enormity any attempt at authorship, whether in prose or verse; who would consider the writer of the present article, to say the least, a very dangerous personage;—any honest woman, we repeat, uniting in her person the qualities (become, alas! too rare) here enumerated, may, not without reason, assume to herself the pompously vulgar title of *Femme de Ménage*. But it is not of her that we are about to treat.

Seven o'clock has just struck by all the clocks, and Paris is stirring. The bustle and noise, hitherto confined to the more remote parts of the city, will soon burst forth. A few pedestrians, like La Fontaine's rats, are seen here and there on the almost deserted pavement; labourers going to their work stop at the street corners

* Charwoman is a very imperfect translation of the French *Femme de Ménage*, but there is no better equivalent in English.

to light their pipes, or to quench, if possible, the ardent thirst which from daybreak seems to assail the Paris workmen; the streets assume an animated appearance, and the houses, hitherto wrapped in the silence of sleep, gradually awaken; street-doors creak on their hinges, with a noise resembling prolonged yawns, and shutters are slowly opened, like heavy eyelids; life again circulates through the endless labyrinths of masonry; the early milkwoman has already called for her cans; the ticket-porter, with his white apron and knot, stands ready for the first errand; and the grocer's boy, stationed at his shop-door sill, with his sleeves tucked above his elbows, gazes up and down the street, with good-natured and merry looks,—thus completing the most striking features of the streets of Paris at seven o'clock in the morning.

But look at that woman yonder, wending her way carefully through the drowsy passengers. Among the sleepy and untidily-dressed females, chiefly domestics, whose business calls them forth at this early hour, this woman is an anomaly: her calm and undisturbed look, her clear eye, and her brisk walk, all show that she has been up some time. Her dress is irreproachable: the most rigid observer, the most scrupulous moralist, could find no fault with it, in point of neatness and extreme propriety. Never was faded muslin cap more carefully adjusted upon a more problematical head of hair; never was neckerchief more neatly crossed;—in fact, nothing in this woman's face or dress would indicate the least trace of an agitated or adventurous existence.

If it be true that the mind is reflected in the countenance; that an inward wound shows itself outwardly; that events, by-past and gone, leave their marks behind; that the human heart, resembling the brazen vases in which the merchants of Smyrna and Constantinople preserve Eastern perfumes, always betrays some indication of the essence within, however closely sealed;—in a word, that every one carries the indelible token of his calling, his habits, his virtues, and his vices,—then shall we be at a loss to guess this woman's profession,—what reminiscences to call to mind at sight of her tidy person,—what rank to assign her in the social scale.

Look at her: she is unaccompanied, her walk is slow and regular, nothing announces that she is in haste. Therefore she is not a workwoman going to her daily task, nor has she the mincing effrontery of a lady's maid; she passes without replying to the friendly smile wherewith the appearance of each new-comer is greeted; she is not of the neighbourhood, for she seems to know nobody; she alone is dressed, while the women about her have merely a scanty covering; she alone seems perfectly awake, while the rest appear at open war with sleep. Who can she be?—Her face, unmeaning, affords no striking indication; her dress nearly resembles the ordinary costume of the lower classes; still in its arrangement it is neater than a servant's, less expensive than a shopkeeper's, and more staid than a grisette's; she is very clean and tidy, but it is a cold and formal cleanliness. Know that this woman, who is neither tradesman's wife nor shopkeeper, nor cook nor grisette; who is always above thirty years of age, and under fifty; who smiles not at the morning gossips, and whom the vigilant porter of yonder unpretending house salutes as she enters with an affable "Good morning," and a friendly "How d'ye do,"—know, gentle reader, that this woman is a Charwoman.

The person whom we have just introduced to the reader is a true Parisian production. If any such women are seen out of Paris, they must have been smuggled by some extraordinary contrivance. Country Charwomen are like French books published in Belgium,—counterfeit editions. It is only in Paris, the city of endless resources, that the Charwoman shines forth in all her glory. By profession, she is the servant of those persons who are not rich enough to have others, and yet are not so poor as to be compelled to do without attendance; she represents the lowest class of domestics; she retails her daily labour,—a servitude which has all the miseries of slavery, without any of its advantages,—which obliges her to change masters and work all day long. Poor creature! it is her lot to work by the piece, or by the hour, according to the will of her employers, exactly as a hackney-coach is engaged.

Of a disposition the reverse of cheerful, but not repining, the Charwoman, particularly in her moments of leisure, affords an example of pious resignation, and forgiveness of injuries. Although generally married, her life is solitary in the midst of the world; and her cheerless days of unintermitted labour drag heavily on, side by side with those more fortunate beings for whose service she seems to have been created. When the Charwoman has no husband, it is because she has lost him, and is widowed; but this loss of the object of her affections, as the phrase goes, makes no change in her condition,—her marriage was only an anticipated widowhood. Married at the usual early age of the lower classes, she only exchanged one kind of slavery for another; she left her home when the management of the family, and indeed all the drudgery of the house, devolved upon her, to place her neck beneath the iron yoke of servitude as the wife of a brutal and drunken tyrant. Even the first days of her union had no honey to sweeten their bitterness; her illusion, if she had cherished any, faded with the flowers she wore in her bosom. Now commenced an existence made up entirely of misery and privations, which resembled the dragging of a heavy chain, until the day that it pleased God to relieve her of the burden. Alas! how often are secret sorrows hidden under the apparently impudent glances of women of the lower orders! How many poor, suffering, and desolate creatures have been repulsed by us in the streets, for addressing their supplications in a harsh and feverish voice, so much do grief and pain change the softest natures! If we knew what gloomy scenes were acted between the wretched walls of a garret, by vice, misery, and shame; if we had sounded the depths of the abyss in which virtue struggles with hunger and poverty; if we had seen to what degree of brutality a human being may be hurried by drunkenness and misfortunes,—we should then understand what greatness and heroism are sometimes concealed beneath a rough and vulgar exterior. Premature wrinkles would reveal whole histories of tears and virtuous resignation; and we should learn to pity and respect the being who, conquering her sex's weakness, triumphing over her body as she had triumphed over her soul, cheerfully submits to the hardest labour, and passes her life uncomplainingly between her brutal, lazy, and drunken husband, who spends her earnings and rewards her with blows, and grumbling, ill-tempered employers, who take advantage of her pliable temper to make the greater exactions on her services.

We remember to have somewhere heard, pronounced with a provincial accent, which gave it still more originality, the following racy proverb:—*Si une merluche devenait veuve, elle engraisserait.**

This proverb is especially applicable to the Charwoman. According to the almost invariable rule of the working classes, where the wife takes an active part, the husband does nothing. We mistake: he divides his time between the public-house and sleeping off his drunken fits at home, and beating his wife. All Charwomen are beaten by their husbands: there is only one exception to this rule, and that is in favour of widows. However, it must not be supposed that the Charwoman looks more sorrowful on this account.—No: on the contrary, she alone knows the secret of her misery; her life is as closely veiled as her person, and perhaps we should never have been able to learn a word about her, if we had not by chance become acquainted with one of whom we shall presently have occasion to speak.

Courageous by profession, long-suffering by temperament, economical by necessity, and sober by choice, the Charwoman is without exception the most valuable of the whole class of domestic servants. The habit of seeing every day new faces has given to her countenance an extreme flexibility. If her features retain their melancholy expression, it shows that she is utterly indifferent to everything around her; but if she wishes to bring back the smile upon your lips, to make you communicative and confidential, to dissipate the cloud gathered on your forehead, to smooth your wrinkled brows, she will devise a thousand ways to divert you from your unpleasant thoughts; she will be insinuating and persuasive till she obliges you to listen to her aphorisms of practical philosophy; she has seen and heard much of the world on her journey through life; and, made wise by her own and other people's experience, she has acquired rules of practical wisdom which she holds in readiness for all the contingencies of life, and which unfortunately she would like to apply to everything. After all, setting aside her individual sorrows and personal antipathies, the number of which is very limited, the Charwoman may be considered a very good woman.

Rising with the sun, her first cares are bestowed on her dress. She has to cross a whole parish, and sometimes more than one, to reach the scene of her labours; and, with her, neatness is more than a luxury,—more than a mere necessary: it is a duty. Otherwise, who would entrust to her the care of their apartments, their clothes, and their furniture? She knows this, and acts accordingly. Her toilet finished, and having shaken the mattress of her bed, she is ready to start,—not, however, without addressing reiterated and earnest recommendations to the only being who shares the joys and sorrows of her life,—the only companion who has remained faithful to her in all her misfortunes.

It is a great error, and unfortunately almost universal, to consider the cat a mischievous animal. As surely as the dog is the friend of man, so surely is the cat the friend of woman, more particularly of the Charwoman. When she is a widow, the Charwoman concentrates on her cat all the affection which she formerly bestowed on her husband; for, however bad the treatment she receives at his hands, a woman in this class of life is pretty generally attached to the husband allotted her by fate.

* If a cod were to lose her husband, she would grow fat.

In inheriting this accession of tenderness, the cat is no doubt aware of the duties imposed in return; and there is consequently soon established between these two isolated creatures a touching and mutual exchange of delicate and minute attentions. For nothing in the world would the Charwoman part with her cat: death alone may separate them, absence never. They are bound one to the other, as the plant is attached to the soil, as the Charwoman clings to the good city of Paris. It must be understood that Paris to her does not extend beyond the boundaries of her own beat, the extreme verge of French territory lying within the barriers. Her country is confined to the street in which is situated the house she has inhabited all her life; and if at her birth she could have entered the same in the register, we should doubtless have found it standing as follows:—"Catherine Bourdon, born the 3rd Fructidor, An. VIII., Rue du Faubourg St. Martin, No. 11, on the fifth floor, department of the Seine."

The Charwoman's politics are always favourable to the fallen dynasty, whoever may be the actual occupier of the throne. She cares little for the overthrow of empires, ministerial crises, or the Eastern question; her sympathies are all for the unfortunate. The name alone of the Republic makes her shudder; and her eyes are not yet so dry that she could not find in them, in case of need, a few tears as an offering to the memory of Louis XVI.

Her literary education is not much in advance. *Victor, ou l'Enfant de la Forêt*, the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, and the bloody dramas of the Ambigu, are the pillars of Hercules beyond which her intelligence doth not go.

It would extend this paper beyond its limits, if we were to develope to the reader her opinions on matters of art; and her no less curious interpretations of dreams, as connected with the lottery,—another fallen power, and consequent subject for her unceasing regret.

Meanwhile, eight o'clock has struck, and the Charwoman's day's work begins. Having called, on her way, for your newspaper, into which she never allows herself to peep, her first care on entering your room is to draw back the curtains, and throw open the shutters, and admit the cheerful light of the sun, and the different noises of the street.

"Good morning, Madame Charlemagne. What o'clock is it?"

"The half hour to nine has just struck."

Her first word is an untruth, but it is a friendly and well-meant one. Perchance you are fond of your bed, and a little lazily inclined,—as who is not?—and if your condition be that of clerk in a government office, punctuality should be your first virtue. For this reason, Madame Charlemagne employs this innocent stratagem to draw you more certainly from the *dolce far niente*. In looking to your interest, the Charwoman is not unmindful of her own; and her ruse has the twofold advantage of stimulating your activity, and enabling her to get forward with her morning's work. Her zeal is most praiseworthy; and although her little trick is covered by a very flimsy veil, it is always successful. You are no sooner risen, than Madame Charlemagne begins to persecute you afresh. You are just beginning to enjoy your newspaper, so obligingly placed within your reach, quite at your ease; you are already deep in the intricate argument of the leading article, or glancing over the

fascinating columns of the feuilleton, when you are disturbed with—"Sir, here are your boots," which at once precipitates you from the etherial regions where your imagination had transported you, to the most common-place reality. But your patience has not yet been sufficiently tried. While walking backwards and forwards, making your bed, and polishing the floor, your Charwoman never fails to hasten your toilet, gently chiding you all the time for your dilatoriness. Presently the fatal sentence is pronounced: you are informed that your breakfast is ready, which simple announcement, in your Charwoman's mouth, might be thus construed: "It is just nine o'clock, Sir; if you do not make haste, you will certainly not be at your office by ten. Besides, Sir, I have other people to attend to, and must be off."

Obs.—The breakfast invariably consists of a cup of *café au lait*, and a chop or cutlet as a standing dish.

Having taken your seat, you are allowed a few minutes' respite. This is the time for familiar and confidential chat. If you make the smallest advance towards conversation, your Charwoman, leaning on her broom-handle, which attitude gives a picturesque air to her recital, will narrate to you, for the hundredth time at least, various little anecdotes concerning her pet cat; or she will give you an account of the miraculous cures performed in her house by an empirical shoemaker, who possesses an infallible remedy against the headache and the heartburn,—for the Charwoman has ever been the guardian angel of quacks and charlatans. She possesses innumerable recipes for the cooking of eggs with a single sheet of paper, and for allaying fever with a piece of burnt copper. She knows, also, how to take stains out of clothes; and can concoct a variety of apocryphal beverages under the inoffensive name of cooling drinks. This woman is an universal panacea. For every disease she knows a remedy; and if anything can surpass her science, it is her desire to make herself useful.

We can vouch for the truth of the following anecdote, which we cannot resist the pleasure of introducing here, since it illustrates, in a simple and touching manner, how near strong affection and self-denial may approach to heroism:—An old bachelor, a superannuated banker's clerk, employed for many years a poor woman, whose weak state of health almost rendered her incapable of her daily toil. The man was nervous and irritable; and all the Charwoman's natural forbearance and sweet temper could not prevent a violent quarrel, three or four times a week, with her passionate and gouty employer. These two beings, lost amongst the immense population of Paris, and almost alone in the world, could never agree. Fortunately, these quarrels, like thunder-storms, did not last long: however, they were only made up to break out on the next occasion, notwithstanding mutual vows of peace and eternal friendship.

"Madame," would the old man say, striking the arm of his easy chair, in which he was nailed by the gout, "you'll be the death of me, that 's certain."

"Why, I'm ——."

"Hold your tongue, woman! You wish to kill me, banging the door after you in that manner. You almost drive me distracted. Will you please to shut the door gently, and begone about your business?"

And the poor woman would go, her heart full, and tears standing in her eyes, but only to return on the morrow, when all would be forgotten. One day, however, the storm was more violent than usual. The old man's anger became so ungovernable that his gout flew to his brain, and he fell back in his chair stiff and cold. For three long months, the faithful Charwoman watched night and day by the bedside of her insensible master. She would not leave him for an instant; the savings of twenty years were expended in medicines; the most skilful doctors were consulted, and most unremitting care lavished on the patient; but all in vain,—it was impossible to save him, and he died.

Nothing could equal the acute grief of the poor Charwoman. She upbraided herself as the cause of her old master's death. She never left the body until it was to be interred, when, subduing her grief, she followed it alone to its final resting-place, nor would she leave the burial-ground till the grave was filled, and the turf replaced. A week after, she died in the hospital, and was buried in the paupers' grave-yard; for nought remained of all her savings, but the remembrance of a good action, which, if it finds its reward in heaven, is no preservation on earth against poverty and its attendant evils.

The Charwoman generally has a great predilection for bachelors. We dare not assert that this is in hatred of Hymen, of whom formerly she had so much reason to complain; but certain it is that a bachelor's service is what suits her best. Perhaps their mutual loneliness, or a kind of reciprocity of tastes and opinions, may help to bring them together. It not unfrequently happens, on the decline of her career, that the Charwoman, surmounting her matrimonial repugnance, and abjuring former prejudices, is united, by indissoluble bands, to an old bachelor, whose nice little income she has long coveted,—it being partly the result of her own economy and care.

There is a truth which has passed into a proverb among all classes of society, ancient and modern, and is universally admitted without question. It is shown on the stage and in books; it is constantly proclaimed and proved in the newspapers; and is much dwelt upon both in town and country,—in fact, everywhere. This incontestible axiom is, that from time immemorial servants have robbed their masters. Let us lose no time in adding, that Charwomen are not included in the class of servants.

The Charwoman is a living example thrown upon the world to demonstrate to all that the immortality of the soul is not an illusion, and that the troubles of this life are only to prepare us for the joys of a future existence: such is, at least, her own idea. For ourselves, we persist in considering the Charwoman a faithful and attached attendant. Setting aside a few exceptions, happily very rare, we declare that she has no equal for brushing a coat, and fine-drawing a torn garment. She extends her care and affection even to inanimate objects; and, in the benevolence of her heart, takes the same interest in her master's property as in her master himself. If there is, in the Charwoman's estimation, anything superior to a bachelor, it is a bachelor's furniture and clothes.

Observe what precaution she takes, with what care she handles even the smallest article of furniture. She alone possesses the secret of preserving antiques. In less

expert hands, the old relics which her master manages to keep in such excellent preservation would long since have crumbled into dust. But it is in the care of his wardrobe that the Charwoman shines most conspicuous. Convinced of the truth, that if the coat does not make the man, it at least improves him, she reserves all her most delicate and assiduous attention for that garment. She brushes, smoothes, shakes, and folds it with admirable solicitude; she loves to renovate its time-worn texture, and to prevent, by a few timely stitches, the anticipated flaws; she alone has the talent to restore to their original appearance the whitened seams of this cherished garment,—for, alas! men's coats turn white even sooner than their hair. When the clothes and furniture are all in order,—when there does not remain a single stain to remove, nor a corner of the room unswept, the Charwoman quietly replaces her shawl on her shoulders, takes off her working apron (the official preservative of her walking dress), and repairs to a fresh scene of successful labours.

When the Charwoman has finished her daily round, she returns home in the evening; and having spent the whole day in the service of others, she enjoys at her ease a little liberty. Her happy quarter of an hour begins when she enters her garret, her kitten's playful gambols recalling the joyous days of her childhood; and in the midst of her own little household cares, she indulges a thousand dreams and fond illusions. It must have been for the Charwoman that the proverb, "As she makes her bed, so must she lie upon it," was invented; for she never makes her bed till evening, which is one of the distinguishing features of her profession.

After a certain time, as the Charwoman advances in years, and becomes incapable of going her daily round, she solicits the place of pew-opener in her parish church, for she is sure to become religious in her old age; or, if such a consolation is denied her, she dies alone in her poverty; she dreads the hospital; and the woman who has passed her life in attending to the wants of others, has had no time to think of her own.



THE "CAPUT."



THE "CANUT."*

BY JOANNY AUGIER.



LYONS is the central residence of a class of operatives who ten years ago were almost unknown in Europe, and even in France their name had not then gone forth beyond the limits of the great manufacturing city, and a few villages of the department of the Rhone, where several silk-factories are established. But in the eventful period that followed the revolution of 1830, the "Canut" made himself conspicuous by the prominent part he took in the bloody disturbances which in 1831 and 1834 decimated the population of the second city of France.

It is not our province to discuss politics or commerce, nor is it our intention to inquire how far the Lyons workmen were justified in their insurrection; our object is to observe the "Canut" in his private life, a life of persevering industry, which contributes to a great extent to the commercial prosperity of the country.

It would be a difficult task to discover the etymology of the word "Canut," the name given to the Lyons weavers, whether employed in manufacturing silk, velvet, or shawls. Perhaps it is derived from "Canette," the bobbin upon which the silk thread is rolled. *Grammatici certant, et adhuc sub judice lis est.*

Of the hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants of Lyons and its suburbs, no less than ninety thousand are "Canuts;" but it is not in the city that the monotonous

* "Canut" is the name given to the operative silkweavers of Lyons.

and wearying noise of their looms is most heard; all the surrounding villages, and more particularly the suburbs of La Guillotière, Vaise, La Croix Rousse, St. Just, Les Brotteaux, are the principal seats selected by the "Canuts" for the exercise of their industry, in consequence of the cheapness of house-rent, food, wine, and beer.

Yet these necessaries of life are dear enough to condemn the "Canut" to daily privations; and those who are interested in the welfare of this respectable class of operatives regret that their wages or profits are not more adequate to their wants. Their place of abode is confined and insalubrious; their food is scanty and unwholesome; and the want of bodily exercise generally disposes the "Canut" to a peculiar exaltation of mind, combined with great physical debility. These are permanent causes of suffering and misery, but he has also to contend with discouragement and improvidence. The slightest illness, a few days out of work, are sufficient to reduce him to penury; and if his struggle with poverty be protracted, we read of those fearful disturbances and bloody riots which, from the last century down to 1831 and 1834, have been so fatal to the prosperity of the great manufacturing city.

The "Canut's" face is pale and thin, his neck long and stiff, his back arched, his body slender, his arm bony; he is bowlegged, his knees are prominent, his feet large and flat. This is not indeed a very flattering portrait, and there are perhaps some exceptions; after all, the "Canut's" ungainly appearance is not his nature's fault, but the effect of his work.

Morally considered, the "Canut" is irritable, sulky, obstinate, vindictive, and diffident, but industrious and orderly: he puts up with no mark of contempt, neither does he lack courage; he assists his friends in distress, subscribes to all benevolent associations, and opposes despotic and illegal measures, whoever may be their promoters. He is illiterate, but he makes up for his want of education by a certain natural intelligence; and if the nature of his laborious avocations did not preclude the exercise of his mental faculties, and too often depress his spirits and counteract his desire of moral emancipation, more remarkable men would emerge from the obscurity of his class, to which the illustrious Jacquard opened a wide career.

The "Canut's" voice is slow, drawling, and monotonous; his language abounds with cant words and slang phrases, and forms a vocabulary quite peculiar to his class.

Every workshop in the suburbs of Lyons is lighted by two small flat lamps, suspended over the looms by a piece of thick twine. The "Canut" generally works in company with a girl and an apprentice. Their conversation is free, and is frequently interrupted by quarrels between the apprentice and the "Canut," made up at the intercession of the girl. Take the following short specimen of a dialogue immediately succeeding a fall-out. Time—evening; scene—a workshop; speakers—a "Canut," his apprentice, and a work-girl.

THE "CANUT."—It is very kind of you, Georgette, to take that boy's part. But if he were my son, he would often have my knife-handle about his ears.

THE GIRL.—There, that will do; we are a lazy set together. (*To the Apprentice*)—Fetch me that stool, Michel. And you, Monsieur Savournin, lend me your lamp, for it is so dark here that I cannot see at all.

THE "CANUT."—Cannot see, Georgette! then sing us something.

THE GIRL.—With all my heart. But first shut the window: I feel the cold coming in.

THE APPRENTICE.—What song is it to be, Ma'mselle?

THE GIRL.—The one written by the factory clerk, to be sure; "the 'Canut' in love."

THE APPRENTICE.—What! do you know that?

THE "CANUT."—Don't we all know it, blockhead?

THE GIRL.—(*Singing in a drawling voice, and stuttering.*)

SONG.

THE "CANUT" IN LOVE.

Fanchon, oh! hearken to my tale
Of love, list what I say;
For as I work I never fail
To think of you each day.
My truth believe,
I'll ne'er deceive,
To you I'll ever faithful prove;
And when in love,
Think of the charm
Of walking with you arm in arm.
Fanchon, for you I always sigh,
Oh! do not think I'd tell a lie;
For, even now, pit pat it goes,
While thus my feelings I disclose.
Whene'er my Fanchonette I see,
I go to make myself quite smart,
And run to meet her on the quay
In hopes to touch her cruel heart.
And when at night,
In slumbers light
I never can my eyelids close,
Nor ever taste a sweet repose,
For oft I fain would have a peep,
Of you who just below me sleep.
Oh! how I wish, that, for the sake
Of watching by you till you wake,
The deuce himself the floor would take.

THE "CANUT" (*delighted*).—Egad, Georgette, it does one good to hear you sing; you made me quite forget my corns.

THE GIRL (*smiling, and casting down her eyes*).—Hold your tongue, silly fellow, &c. &c.

The interior of the "Canut's" dwelling is remarkable for its wretchedness, its confusion, and too often its dirt. One or two looms, a common chest of drawers sadly out of repair, a deal safe, half protected by brass wires, and a green cotton curtain; three or four ricketty chairs almost destitute of rushes, a miserable bed in a loft, which is reached by means of a ladder placed against a trap-door in the ceiling, compose the whole of his furniture. But these are absolute necessaries. When the "Canut" indulges in any luxury, you may see the walls of his room ornamented with rough prints, wretchedly coloured, and representing such subjects as The Wandering Jew, Pyramus and Thisbé, Genevieve of Brabant, &c. Again,

on the mantel-piece are scattered in confusion a common bust of Napoleon, a large plaster-of-paris cat, pigeon's eggs and preserved fruits carefully placed in a glass-case, two gourds hollowed into the shape of bottles; and in the centre, under a square glass-case, a blown model of a hamlet, with its cottages, mill, river, and trees; or the Wise Men's Offerings—the whole embellished with cut paper, shells, and moss.

The panes of the window are of oil-paper instead of glass, and on the window-ledge are invariably placed drinking-cups and earthen pipkins for cooking, or flower-pots containing roots of favourite flowers, as wall-flowers and stocks; there is, also, a jar containing plums or cherries preserved in brandy, the sight of which suffices to cheer the "Canut's" heart every morning, and which he is proud to offer every friend or relation who comes to see him.

The "Canut's" daily meals are three in number. He breakfasts on a kind of white cheese, flavoured with garlic, butter, and onions; his dinner is composed of pickled pork, or potatoes and white cheese; and at his supper he again returns to his favourite cheese, with perhaps a piece of stock-fish, equal, in his estimation, to eel or turbot. His ordinary beverage is wine at three-pence per bottle, though, too frequently, he is obliged to content himself with water.

The "Canut" is a lover of tobacco, but he only takes it in the shape of snuff: he holds pipes, and cigars particularly, in the greatest contempt.

He rises early, and goes to bed late. During the day, he interrupts his work to take a short nap about noon. The monotony of his daily labour is only occasionally relieved by the visit of the clerk of the factory* for which he is at work, or the call of a friendly neighbour who takes in a Lyons paper, and entertains him with an account of the latest news, the state of the country, the speeches of the most eminent deputies, &c. In the evening, by the light of his little loom-lamp, he enlivens his labour with some more agreeable occupation, as reading a play, or one of Ducray-Dumesnil's novels, or singing, as he feels inclined, a sentimental ballad, or a patriotic song.

It has frequently been said that costume is a faithful type of the man: the "Canut" is a confirmation of the truth of the observation, and a Lyons citizen never fails to recognize him at first sight. His clothes are as regularly uniform as regimentals; he never varies their cut or colour, nor the materials of which they are made.

All the year round, the "Canut" wears no coat in-doors, his arms having no other covering than his shirt-sleeves. When young, he wears a Greek cap; and as he grows old, this he changes for a cotton or woollen night-cap. He may be seen wearing an old pair of trowsers of indescribable colour, somewhat approaching to a red; two slips of cloth list serve him for braces, when his hips are not prominent enough to render supporters unnecessary. He does not indulge in the luxury of stockings, and an old pair of shoes deck his feet.

When he walks abroad, and particularly on holydays, he always wears a hat with an immense crown; his body-coat is light blue with gilt buttons; his trowsers are either of nankeen or a light drab woollen cloth; his shirt collar, very high and stiff, goes over his ears, and the front, small plaited, is ornamented with a pin sur-

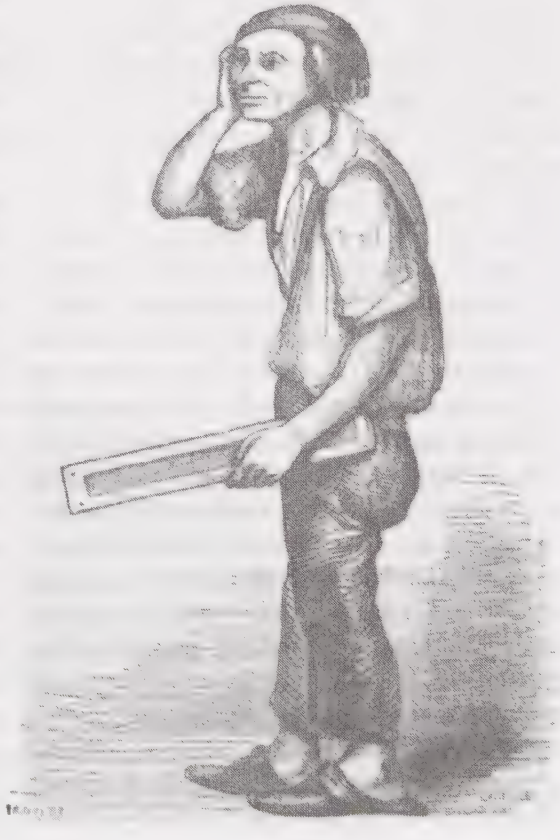
* The silk-weaver in Lyons generally works at home, one establishment not unfrequently supplying him with employment the whole year round.

mounted by a golden fly: round his neck he wears an embroidered white kerchief. His waistcoat is invariably either white or yellow; his stockings are of blue cotton, and he walks in thin low shoes, tied with large black ribbon bows. He constantly saws the air with his hand, and sometimes even strikes persons walking in the street. When he desires to assume an air of importance or ease, he carries a walking-stick, which he whirls somewhat after the same fashion that a drum-major handles his staff.

Having spoken of the "Canut's" work, let us now see what are his enjoyments.

First, and as a general rule, Sunday and Monday are his only holydays; he would be unable to enjoy himself any other day. As a preliminary to his two days' relaxation he repairs at an early hour to the barber's to be shaved. Shortly afterwards, he walks to the market-place, where he is sure to find some of his fellow-workmen, with whom he passes three or four hours discussing the price of silk, their employer's arrangements, the prospect of trade, the measures of government, and the state of public affairs. After dinner he plays at bowls, or goes a fishing. In the evening he may be seen quietly seated in the pit of a minor theatre, where he successively swallows two melodramas and four vaudevilles, trying to retain in his memory the most striking passages and the best songs. Or perhaps he takes a seat with three or four friends round a table in a public-house, to pass the evening at cards, singing drinking-songs. On these occasions, he generally drinks too much, and will not stir till the lights are put out, when he staggers into the street with his companions, to reach his home the best way he can.

The "Canut" is also very fond of witnessing the exibition of a kind of puppet-show (*marionnettes*), quite peculiar to the country, where the principal person of the drama, in the style of the Italian Pulcinello, and the English Punch, is called Guignol, and is a type of the "Canut" himself, who laughs as loud as any at the jests merrily pointed at himself.



Sometimes, again, the "Canut" will spend a whole morning before a street-organ player: after laying out a penny in the purchase of the book of songs, he will follow every verse with the utmost attention and delight.

However shy and silent, our hero may be induced to break through his reserve, and pay his tribute to love. On such an occasion, he is eminently gallant, and becomes a true lady-killer. But the object of his passion must be an apprentice

or factory-girl engaged in his own employment. It is very rarely that he pays any attention to nursery-maids or cooks, nor does he care for the peasant-girls; all his feelings are engrossed by the apprentice or factory-girl, his true female. When in love, the "Canut" neglects nothing, omits nothing—seductive smiles, sweet words, numerous attentions, small presents,—he leaves nothing untried; and most fortunate does he deem himself when his pains are rewarded, and his love at last returned. Let us add to his honour, that his court is always with a view to the lawful and honourable state of wedlock, and that his engagement is constantly sanctioned by the church.

After all, marriage suits his inclination, and when he remains single, it is in reality because he cannot help himself.

The enjoyments above described must be understood to be those of the unmarried "Canut," who has not yet sown his wild oats. When at last his choice is made, and he settles down, a great change in his appearance and morals immediately takes place.

Imprimis, and considered physically, he grows fat and corpulent; morally, he generally becomes a good husband and a good father, and every year adds another child to his family. He shaves himself every Sunday, frequents no more public-houses, and goes to the play only once a quarter, in company with his wife. The married "Canut" is very regular in his attendance at church on Sundays, and the merriment of his little family forms his greatest enjoyment.

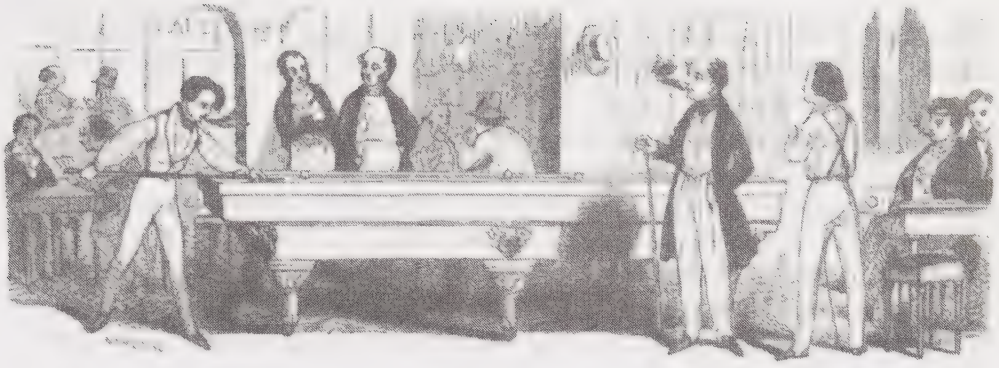
Every year he has three grand days devoted to convivial meetings with his relatives, and sometimes with some of his fellow weavers: these days are Easter Sunday, Whit Sunday, and Christmas Day. They generally "go off" with great eclat. For these occasions are particularly reserved a leg of mutton, a turkey, and a favourite dish of sausages,—the "Canut" knows no greater luxuries: and the discussion of these delicacies is seasoned by cheerful conversation, hearty laughter, and comic songs.

All things considered, we like the "Canut" better married than single. Married, he has in store a certain share of happiness: he may save a few shillings, and though he has no chance of making a fortune, he may, at least, secure by providence the necessaries of life for his declining years. Single, he has no better perspective than cheerless loneliness, toil, poverty, and the hospital.

Such is the "Canut"—the industrious workman, whose labour has made Lyons the richest manufacturing city in France, and who is there treated with ridicule and degrading contempt,—he is abused for his slovenliness, his ignorance, his poverty, and his sulkiness. It is admitted that all reforms, to be safe, must proceed gradually; and the time has come to commence in earnest the work of the "Canut's" emancipation. His is very far from the improved condition of most other working-classes in France, and he has a right to expect, in return for all the wealth incessantly created by his labour, a more just allotment of the comforts of life. Government might easily, without yielding to threatening riots and armed insurrections, and prompted only by kindred feelings of humanity, provide for this respectable class of workmen a better system of education, and pay at the same time more attention to their material wants. Thus let us hope that some day, while their exertions contribute in the same degree as at present to the national prosperity, they may enjoy, with the glory of being unrivalled by foreign artisans, a less scanty share of happiness.



THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.



THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

BY RAOUL PERRIN.



ENGLISH READERS, are you desirous to know the French Commercial Traveller? In France, at the present day, the Commercial Traveller is an essentially malleable and cosmopolite being, who has been invested with a form, a quality, and a name. The Commercial Traveller is a worshipper of weights and measures, of sugar-cane and ginger, of broad-cloth and calico. The Commercial Traveller is the most active expression of mercantile civilization, the *nec plus ultra* of the honour and dignity of the warehouse; the arterial element of the manufacturer, the consignee, and the wholesale dealer; the *vade semper* of over-stocked merchants; the beloved purveyor of the packer, the coach-porter, and the waggon proprietor; the cherished Shiloh of mine host, the chambermaid, and the boots; the oracle of the table d'hôte; the privileged guest of the tap-room and of the billiard-room; the ——. But what is not the Commercial Traveller? Was ever a pun perpetrated, a merry tale related, an enigma propounded, or a conundrum put, where he was not? Was ever a good thing said, or a droll story told, in his absence? No. It will therefore be admitted that the Commercial Traveller is an eminently agreeable and useful member of society.

The class of Commercial Travellers is subdivided to infinity, into categories, sections, types, and prototypes; but seven species are particularly distinguishable,

namely, the Travelling Partner, the Interested Traveller, the Traveller on Commission, the Traveller with a Roving Commission, the District Traveller, the Traveller on Foot, and the Pedlar.

The Travelling Partner may be recognized by the gravity of his countenance, the cautious prudence of his manners, and the dignity of his demeanour. At the inn, he takes his place at the least crowded part of the table, eats quietly, utters not a word, watches all that is passing, frowns, methodically folds his table-napkin, takes a toothpick, rises, and strolls into the town to call on his customers. His entrance into a house is calm and dignified, and regulated in proportion to the importance of his transactions with its head. One glance round the warehouse enables him to calculate the wants of his customer; and before the latter has had time to recollect the state of his shelves, the Travelling Partner has written a list of orders in his order-book, saying, "You are in want of such a thing; such an article sells very well with you; I will send you so much of this, and such a quantity of that, &c." This is the way the Partner generally procures very extensive orders, by taking, as it were, the dealer by assault, and not giving him time to edge in a word about refusal, stock-on-hand, or what not. Besides, being the head of the house for which he travels, he has it in his power to make concessions, and to afford advantages; and it would not be becoming to let him leave the shop without an order. The Travelling Partner will obtain a commission where any other Traveller from his own house might seek one in vain: the former is always the more successful. This is the natural effect of certain small influences which ever prevail with the unconscious dealer. The Travelling Partner's dress is neither gaudy, tight, nor loose. It is clean, of good materials, carefully brushed, and always has the gloss of newness.

The Travelling Partner never wears more than one glove, always a new glove: he carries an old and ragged one in his right hand. Recently, and particularly since the Revolution of 1830, he has ventured to wear the real India silk pocket-handkerchief, printed at Lyons.

The Interested Traveller is of problematical age, generally between thirty-five and forty, and most commonly wears a wig and false teeth. If by chance his own hair and teeth are good, he takes care to be provided with a small leaden comb, the constant use of which conceals the depredation of time on his head. He is careful to comb before his ears the straggling hair that he has left; and when he speaks, he opens his mouth just wide enough to give free action to his tongue. The Interested Traveller is an interesting biped, generally short, somewhat stout, inclined to corpulency, and a good fellow withal. He is rather dandified in his dress, uses eau-de-Cologne, if not other perfume, wears a white neckcloth, a white waistcoat, and black coat and trousers,—not modern dandyism this. On the forefinger of his right hand he displays a heavy gold keeper; his shirt studs are of mother-of-pearl or ivory; and his gold watch-chain is twisted *à la Vaucanson*. At table, he talks little, but well and slowly; his conversation is tinged with a slight shade of affectation, and a tendency to exaggeration pervades it, but passes unobserved under an air of frankness and veracity. The Interested Traveller does not mix with the common herd of Travellers in the inn: he takes his coffee at the table d'hôte, rises, converses a moment with the landlord, calls the boy to give his boots a brush, and fetch

a porter to carry his sample portmanteau. With his customers he is, as everywhere else, polite, obliging, and obsequious: he kisses the baby, pats the spaniel, pays a compliment to the young lady behind the counter, and offers a pinch of snuff to the master of the shop. He inquires respecting the state of the vintage, foretels the result of the season, speaks at some length on the state of the grain-market, obligingly inquires after Madame's health, and invites her husband to come and see him in Paris. "We will dine at the Rocher," laughs the Traveller; adding, in a lower key, "and discuss a bottle of Aï, eh!" Briefly, he obtains an order, often a very extensive one.

The Traveller on Commission was, under the Empire, an apocryphal being,—a creature of the imagination, or at least of a very doubtful nature: after the Restoration, he became materialized,—acquired a head, body, and arms; and, since the Three Days, he has so identified himself with his part, and has so scrupulously believed in the perfectibility of the present epoch, that he has rendered himself the terror of shopkeepers, warehouses, and trade in general. For the reader to form an idea of this ingenious creation of the century, let him imagine a man about fifty years of age, rather over than under, the proprietor of a head crowned with an aureola of grey hair, well greased, and brushed flat off his temples. His dress consists of a threadbare coat, trousers gathered round the waist, a Spanish cloth stock, a white hat, and boots down at the heels. Thus equipped, somewhat "en Robert Macaire," he affects the dandy, and now and then shakes the snuff from his faded shirt bosom, to display the hair ring with a small diamond, the gift of his last conquest. The Commission Traveller has visited every country of the known world; he has seen all, examined all, observed all, and appreciated all. He knows all ways and means, is familiar with all resources, all marches and countermarches, all ins and outs,—in a word, with the whole arcana of his trade, his profession, or his art. Mention to him an important house: he pauses a moment, but do not think he hesitates. Gracefully throwing himself back in his chair, and placing his thumb in the armhole of his velveteen waistcoat with carved buttons, by way of preamble, he will reply, with an intelligent nod, "Such a house? Of course I know it. I was clerk in that same house, with the head partner, in the year IX." Name a merchant: "I know him; he was at the entering-desk when I was shipping-clerk." Mention a banker's name: "I know M.——; he was collecting-clerk at ——'s when I ——." The Commission Traveller has, in short, been everything, has done everything, and actually is nothing, and nothing does. For instance, we cannot with truth deny that he knows by heart the names of all the hotels in France, and all their respective good and bad qualities; he knows all their cooks, the dishes in which they excel, and what to order at every inn he stops at; finally, he is on excellent terms with the maids,—not that he is generous; on the contrary, he is extremely stingy. Generosity indeed! civilization and positivism have abolished the virtue; but, as an offset to his niggardliness, he is bland, facetious, and courteous. He is earnest in his praises of the chambermaid's charms, congratulates the cook on his sauces, and is by no means sparing of his compliments to mine host.

He invariably prefers the society of young travellers—novices on the road. And why?—Because he is a capital hand at dominoes, billiards, whist, and écarté;

and, once in the coffee-room, he knows how to make the novice pay for his (the Commission Traveller's) coffee, his glass of absinthe, his cigar, and his bottle of beer, which is so much saved. The Traveller on Commission (we ask his pardon, but truth must out) is a perfect Diogenes. If ever you should perchance be present at an indelicate conversation, in which you feel yourself under the necessity of abstaining from taking a share, and which makes the lady seated near you blush and cast down her eyes, look at the head of the table, and ten to one but you observe a dirty wretch, with untrimmed beard, bottle-nose, protuberant chin, and a dull, bleared eye, that looks for all the world like dirty mother-of-pearl:—that man is a Commission Traveller,—Roger Bontemps *in propria*,—Aretin resuscitated,—the obscene story-teller, who respects neither the table at which he is seated, nor the company present, even though females chance to be of the party. We have said that tradesmen dislike him, and dread his visits. In order to get rid of him, they give him an order,—a small one it is true, but what matters that? He takes care to double it when he sends the order to the firm who has had the misfortune to trust their samples to his care. When the goods reach the tradesman, he sees how he has been tricked, swears loudly and deeply at the rascally Traveller, and leaves the goods for the manufacturer's account. Meanwhile, the Commission Traveller has returned to Paris, touched his per-centage, and wants no more. He has cheated both customers and his principal; but his profits are realized, and he will begin anew.

The Traveller with a Roving Commission* is generally a tall, fair young man; he is the exquisite of the road, and the Lovelace of the trade; he enjoys a good salary, has an indefinite daily allowance, and is in his principal's confidence. Not unfrequently, he has received the rudiments of a good education; and, in such a case, he is generally inclined to pedantry. Sometimes he has taken a degree, when he affects a purity of language that would have enraptured Vaugelas and Le Tellier. At every town in which he makes a stay, he takes a bath, nurses himself with the utmost care, and renews the air in his elastic cushions. He always smokes real Havannahs, wears yellow gloves and octagonal glasses, and carries a bottle of salts. At table, he drinks Bordeaux-Medoc and Seltzer water, cannot touch plain beef or mutton, turns up his nose at ordinary dishes, and reserves himself for the second course and the dessert. In short, he eats and drinks little, and always rises first from table. To see his important step, his Parisian toilette, his polite but rather stiff manners, his delicate appetite, and the respect paid him by everybody in the inn, one is naturally tempted to say to oneself, "That young man is certainly the representative of a good house." He does not regularly attend the coffee-house; and when he enters it, it is only to read the papers, previously to paying his calls. On entering a tradesman's warehouse, he politely bows, addresses himself to the principal, and offers his services with an easy unembarrassed air. He introduces himself with the simple phrase, "Sir, I represent the firm of ——." On this, his

* This sea-term is the nearest English equivalent of *Voyageur libre*, which answers to our English Mercantile Traveller. The six different kinds of Travellers described in the text are peculiar to France. Though a Traveller on his own account, to all intents and purposes, we do not include the seventh (the Pedlar) under the designation of "Commercial Traveller."—Ed.

invariable opening sentence, he pauses. If the tradesman wishes to give him an order, well and good: he gives it forthwith. Otherwise, the Traveller on a Roving Commission is too well acquainted with the dignity of his house to descend to supplication, or cringe for an order. The Traveller on a Roving Commission always travels in the coupé of the diligence. He is gallant to the fair sex, and civil to everybody, even to the conductor and the postilion. He *was* the type of the elegant, the refined Traveller; but he has passed away. Railways and competition have driven him from the road: the Traveller on a Roving Commission is no more.

The District Traveller is a self-sufficient, smooth-tongued, pert, little whipper-snapper of a school-boy, between eighteen and two-and-twenty, with a beard on his upper lip. He is the peacock of the profession,—curled, perfumed, and full of conceit. He wears a waistcoat that counts only three buttons, and boots of glazed leather, and his trousers fit tight to his skin. He carries in his gloved hand a curious-twisted holly stick; and his hair hangs in ringlets outside the collar of his coat. He is allowed ten or twelve francs a day for his expenses, and his salary is between a thousand and twelve hundred francs per annum. His route is traced out for him on the map; he has to take so many towns on his journey, and is allowed a day in one, two days in another, according to their importance, so as to go over the ground in a given time. He modestly travels in the rotonde of the diligence; and, on alighting in a town, he employs his time as follows:—In the first place, he takes a stroll through the town, to stretch his legs, and acquire an appetite. It is really too soon to call on his customers, who cannot have left their beds, argues he; for, in the country, tradesmen are not early risers, and are very fond of enjoying the *far niente*. They make money slowly, it is true, but very easily. Secondly, he repairs to his inn to breakfast,—a meal that he dwells upon with delight. This he may do, especially as it does not cost him a farthing more. The guest may or may not have an appetite: he always has—in the eyes of the landlord. The District Traveller is so well persuaded of this truth, that he would rather eat breakfast enough for two, than not eat enough for one. Thirdly, he repairs to the coffee-house, takes his coffee, plays for it, and loses; plays again, and a second time loses; plays again, and again loses. He pays, in the end, for the coffee of all the company, and this costs him eighteen francs. He must, at all hazards, indemnify himself for this loss; and, for this purpose, he stays a day over his time in the town. When in the towns, Travellers play in the coffee-houses, and so lighten their expenses; but those diligences are ruination! Fourthly, one o'clock striking, he sallies out to call on his customers. But tradesmen do not very cordially receive the District Traveller. "Sir," one will say, "we are in want of nothing;" or, "If you should be passing this way to-morrow ——." "Travellers!" doles out a third, "one sees nothing but Travellers." "I have had enough of Travellers," echoes a fourth. To all these more or less flattering observations, the District Traveller bows, and expresses his thanks. "Sir, you ——," a tradesman will begin: the Traveller interrupts him with, "Sir, I assure you the pattern is entirely new, and exclusive to our house." The Traveller meets "Sir, you are importunate," with "Three months' credit, and three per cent. off; you will never

have such another offer." "My dear Sir, you are losing your time." "Sir, I am travelling with that object in view!" When a shopkeeper perceives the approach of a District Traveller, he cries, before the latter enters his shop, "Sir, it is completely useless; we are well stocked with every article in which we deal,"—while not unfrequently his shop does not contain an ell of ribbon, or an ounce of brown sugar, or a pound of indigo. It must be confessed that a more unwelcome reception could scarcely be given to a tinker or scissors-grinder, nor even to one's landlord the day after quarter-day.

The District Traveller is a model of perseverance, and allows his customers no rest till they give him orders: this is a standing rule with him. *Labor omnia vincit improbus.* He also makes his principals pay for his coffee, his washing, admission to the theatre, and other petty expenses, which he enters under other items to his employers' account. Everybody knows this, except the partners themselves. They believe or not in their Traveller's sincerity; but they always pay, without a murmur, his account, as made out by himself,—in other words, the expenses of a five months' journey instead of three. The District Traveller treats his principals as he treats their customers.

The Traveller on Foot is a very civil fellow, artful, though really frank, and rather cunning, though a faithful servant. He is generally a native of Picardy, and rich in virtues. Six, seven, or eight francs are given him, according to the season and the state of business. He wears a blouse and gaiters, carries a stout cudgel, and, with a trifle in his pocket, wherewith to pay for something to drink on the way, he sets out as light as a bird, and as happy as a fish in water. He sends his samples and his knapsack by the waggon, by way of economy, the result of which is to be entered by profits and losses. When he arrives in a town, he washes and shaves, and, having brushed his shoes and clothes, he takes his samples under his arm, and calls on his customers. The Foot Traveller, universally recognized as an inoffensive and quiet visitor, is never refused admittance by a country tradesman. On entering a shop, he deposits his hat and his card of samples on the counter; and, without giving the master time to speak, he addresses him with, "Quite well, thank you; and how have you been?"—"*Mósieu,*" answers the shopkeeper with dignity, "your most obedient." The Foot Traveller only calls on the petty tradesmen, the dealers in everything on a small scale; and these chandlers are prouder than rich wholesale houses. The Foot Traveller is no stickler for politeness: he plants himself on the counter beside his hat, beats time with his iron-tipped heels, speaks of the state of the weather, and presently starts a political discussion. Now the shopkeeper's face begins to brighten up,—your chandler is a great politician; and the Foot Traveller, whose politics are always conformable to those of his customer, takes care to let his interlocutor have the best of the argument. A discussion arises on the expediency of a measure recently brought before the Chamber, opinions differ, and the feelings of both parties become roused; a neighbour enters, and espouses a side of the question, or perhaps varies in his view of the matter from both disputants. The point at issue is debated in all its bearings, and much breath is expended, without either of the wiseacres convincing his opponents. The Foot Traveller is at first in the Opposition; he speaks warmly, enthusiastically, whether pure French or not he

is indifferent; he argues en Mirabeau, he gesticulates, unfolds his arguments at great length, and labours like a demoniac; his voice rises with his enthusiasm, and his flow of words seems inexhaustible. Astonished and confounded, his auditors let him have it all his own way: his point is gained. The discussion having thus reached its height, the cunning Foot Traveller instantly hauls down his colours, and gives into the opinion of the shopkeeper, the vanity of the latter being flattered in proportion to the warmth of the dispute. The tradesman's self-love is gratified; and such is his good humour with himself, inspired by this homage to his forensic powers, that he is unable to refuse the Traveller an order.

The Traveller on Foot follows up his triumph even with the shopman, who is a person of some importance in the establishment of a general dealer in a country town. He addresses him as "My dear friend," promises him a situation in Paris, offers him a glass of liqueur, and accompanies him to the shooting-gallery; he instructs him in the use of the boxing-gloves, shows him how to use nature's arms to the best advantage, &c. The Foot Traveller obtains, perhaps, more orders than either of his brothers of the road.

The Pedlar, the French Autolycus of the day, is a kind of Alcides in a blue-striped blouse. All the Pedlar's arms, both offensive and defensive, consist of a holly stick, with a thong of leather attached. He may be recognized by his oil-skin hat-cover, his blue velveteen trousers, which reach just above his thighs, the high hob-nailed boots that protect his feet and calves, and the traditional oath ever on his lips. Having selected a sub-prefecture—sub-prefectures are his sea-ports, his favourite fields for the exercise of his talents—he looks out for a temporary shop. The public-houses at which he puts up generally have a room reserved on purpose for Pedlars. Having found a room to suit him, the Pedlar unpacks his wares, and ranges them round the smoky shelves, on which full daylight never shines. So much the better for the Pedlar, whose customers are the less able to detect the bad quality of his goods, the rust-spots on his razors, the darn in a piece of lace, or the poor colour of a cotton handkerchief. "Admirable!—superb!" cries the Pedlar, enraptured with the gloom that prevails in this temporary shop; and the customer will be taken in, like a bird on a limed twig. His preliminary arrangements made, the Pedlar beats up for buyers: he coaxes, flatters, cajoles, and *persuades* his customer—taking care to attack him on his weak side. In truth, he does not pride himself on the elegance of his language, and his rhetorical figures are not the best selected; but his object is to sell his wares, and he attains it; for the sub-prefecture customer prefers exercising his own judgment to trusting to that of the Traveller. The Pedlar always wears the same costume, summer and winter. He eats and drinks with waggoners and carriers; and sleeps in his show-room, with his wife, his wares, and his dog. By this he acquires fleas, but he also saves fivepence a night. He works like a galley-slave all day among his twopenny customers, and leaves off no richer than he began. Formerly, he made a fortune with a bale of woollens on his back; now-a-days he has a spring cart, thrice as much merchandize, and three times less profits.

Does the reader desire to know what becomes of the Commercial Traveller in his latter days? With a few rare exceptions, the Travelling Partner becomes a gouty

capitalist, and the justice of peace of his parish. After having supplied his connexion with lastings, spirits, or other articles of home produce, he distributes to pleaders stamped paper, and reads them lectures and exhortations. He has not changed his trade: its form is still the same, while the articles alone are altered.

The Interested Traveller, having reached his seventieth year, may travel no longer; and is obliged to accept a sinecure in the shape of a seat in the orchestra of one of the minor Paris theatres: thus he turns a problematical talent to account, which, however, procures him the advantage of an evening employment, access to rehearsals, and opportunities to watch green-room adventures. After having been interested, he takes an interest in others; so that his condition can scarcely be said to change.

The Commission Traveller was born, lives, and dies, or will die, in a diligence. For him the condition ought to be irrevocably hereditary; hence he and his travelling portmanteau are always on the road, and hence he will no more abandon the diligence than the veteran will abandon his sentry-box and his dinner-knife; hence, so long as, like the Wandering Jew, he has five sous in his pocket, and some orders in perspective, he will always be happy, contented, without sorrow, and without care. The diligence is his country, his family, his friends; and having received his first smile, the diligence will accept the closing account of his last sigh.

The Traveller on a Roving Commission, having returned to his firm, becomes head warehouseman, and eulogises ribbons, Lucifer matches, or mangel-wurzel seed. Having succeeded to his employer's business, and industriously traded on his own account till he has amassed a fortune of between fifteen and twenty thousand francs a year, and reached his fortieth year, he may, at this mature age, retire from business, and enter the Chamber as a Deputy; and, not to abandon his ancient calling, there defend the constitutional rights of the people.

The Pedestrian Traveller is metamorphosed into a shopkeeper of the Rue St. Denis, or a manufacturer of wax candles, or cotton night-caps. Neither must he be behind his neighbours in the march of civilization. He marries, his children call him "Papa," and he possesses a terrier that goes through the extension motions and carries a basket between his teeth, like the late illustrious Munito, of happy memory.

As for the Pedlar, by dint of farthings, halfpence, and sixpences, carefully saved, he becomes master of a few thousand francs, which he has sent, from time to time, to his native province,—nearly always Auvergne or Limousin; and his sixtieth winter having, as Dorat would say, made him feel the want of repose, he sells his spring-cart, horse, and remaining stock, and returns to the midst of the scenes endeared to him by his infancy, rich in the possession of four hundred and fifty francs a year, and an acre of vineyard—not to speak of the rheumatic pains laboriously acquired during forty years of anxiety and privation.

Such is the septemvirate of Commercial Travellers, such as it has been, such as it is, and such as it will long remain, notwithstanding the vicissitudes of fortune, and the animadversions of hard-hearted customers. Formerly, in the good old times, when, before crossing the frontiers of a department, it was a rule to make one's will, the good qualities of this useful and excellent class of men were so well appreciated, that country tradesmen were wont every morning to go to the hotel to inquire

whether a traveller was arrived. Dealers always had their orders prepared a week in advance; they begged and prayed the Traveller to accept them, such as they were; they would not have hesitated to kneel to attain their object; they would not stop at offering the Traveller a family dinner, besides paying for his coffee, and the standing glass of liqueur; they would desire their shopmen to be polite, civil, and obliging; their wife, to take her hair out of paper, and put on her smartest cap; their children, to bow and courtesy, and kiss their hands; their cashier, to accompany the Traveller to the café to take a bottle of beer, and to the play to see one of Scribe's vaudevilles; to the cathedral, to see the painted windows; to the museum, to see—nothing. In a word, the Traveller was the object of attentions of all sorts, and of a great display of civility, but at a small cost, as the Traveller used to pay all his expenses. But all this has passed away at the present day: the roles are changed. Stars, men, and Commercial Travellers have undergone strange revolutions: stars are overthrown, men are still struggling to overthrow one another, and Commercial Travellers have preceded them, are following them, and will follow them to the last gasp in this general confusion.

Time was when country dealers knew Paris, Rheims, and Amiens, by name only. Commercial Travellers, those canals of French industry, spread all over the kingdom the heterogeneous contents of their sample-bags, like bonbons from a cornucopia over a confectioner's shop-door; and the countryman, on seeing all these wonders of human ingenuity, presided over his dear counter with becoming pride. Any toy of Parisian manufacture was then looked upon as something very foreign, and esteemed accordingly; and this veneration was reflected on the Commercial Traveller, the fortunate and honoured dispensator of the most marvellous productions of modern industry. But now—*O tempora! O mores!*—now that Satan has prompted the diabolical invention or discovery, which enables the most timid native of Brives or Avallon to transport himself to Paris in less time than is required to open the eyes, shut them, take a pinch of snuff, and close one's mull, no country dealer thinks of depriving himself of a visit to the metropolis. The chandler alone, the man of half-ounces and half-yards, of twopences and groats, the general retail dealer on a very small scale, still retains the antiquated dread of Paris, its noise, its crowd, its bustle; and, above all, the *expenses* incurred to live not nearly so well as at Laval or Bar-le-Duc, with his pot-au-feu, his jelly, or his rice chicken; and hence, in his Gothic quietism, the obscure country general dealer is the last hope of the poor Traveller. What, indeed, would become of the latter, without his little order of one hundred and fifty, two hundred, and sometimes even three hundred francs?

Such is the result of civilization and the social progress. Civilization has swept away the humble shopkeeper, and in his place has arisen the aspiring merchant; our social progress has multiplied diligences, which, conjointly with low fares, have conspired against the Commercial Traveller. Civilization has robbed us of the obsequious tradesman, and from his ashes has sprung to light the difficult and independent customer; the last ten years have introduced railways, which will give a final blow to diligences; and, thanks to Green and Margot, will eventually give way for aërial travelling in balloons; and so on, until perfection, giving impossibility the lie, will reach the highest point, and cause its own destruction.

From this it has resulted that, at the present day, those Commercial Travellers who have escaped shipwreck, become the martyrs, the drudges, the expiatory victims of their employers' insatiable cravings; from this has it resulted that Commercial Travellers have become the begging servants, and the repulsed, scorned, and abashed collectors of the house they represent, or strive to represent. Go, sorry wretch, go! and, for the sum of twelve francs a day, including board and lodging en diligence, go prostitute your character, go sell your conscience, go measure the sincerity of your protestations on the quality of your sugars, and the fast colour of your stuffs. Run from door to door, begging a smile of one, a shake of the hand from another, an order from every one, and obtaining——nothing. Run, you who have neither faith nor law, neither religion nor principles.—No; for what faith may guide you, what law may you obey, what principles may you profess, and by what religion may you be inspired? You have nothing,—nothing belongs to you: you are not allowed to have even an opinion. All must come to you from your customers,—faith, law, principles, and religion. Cameleon that you are, you settle on your employers' connexion, you reflect its colours, you copy its language, you imitate its manners, you tread, step by step, in its wake, you are wholly and solely its slave; your employers' customers are your divinities, your idols, your good genius, your hope, your north-star, and your support; they are your desolation, your good angel, and your sheet-anchor. All hail, then, to your employers' all-powerful customers! May they not be ungrateful for your servile devotion to their sacred selves; may they recompense you for your attention to their wants and wishes; and, by extensive orders, pour the balm of confidence into the wounds they have so often inflicted on your vanity and your peace.



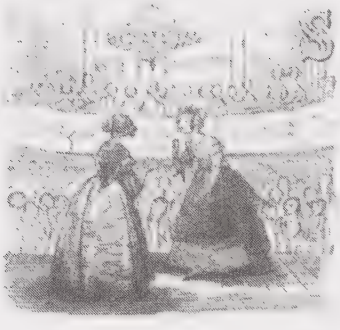


THE PUPIL OF THE ACADEMY.



THE PUPIL OF THE ACADEMY.*

BY L. COUAILHAC.



SOMETIMES, no doubt, you have been loitering, by ten o'clock in the morning, about the Faubourg Poissonnière (it might happen to the most fastidious), and you have invariably fallen in, between the Rues Richer and de l'Echiquier, with a battalion of young girls belonging to the trotting gentry described by La Fontaine, all of them—the elbows in their sides, the head upright—hurrying along, and carrying a *Solfége de Rodolphe*, or an odd volume of the Repertory of the *Comédie Française*, and walking towards a plain building opening near the corner of the Rue Bergère.

You have been perhaps wondering who these young girls could be; yet, if you had been an observer by taste, or, what is less pleasant, by profession, and if you had attentively watched them, you would have most probably discovered some outward mark indicative of their social position.

Come, let us take our stand for a short time on the pavement opposite to the modest building, and study them together.

* The Conservatoire in France corresponds, in many respects, to the Royal Academy; but the instruction is there more extensive, and embraces more branches of the arts.

Did you suppose they were grisettes?—No: all the grisettes have been at work since eight o'clock. Neither can they belong to the rich and fashionable classes of society. Young girls of that station of life have not left their bed, and the time is hardly come when they prepare themselves to receive their grammar-master.—Look carefully how they are dressed. Their costume, we must confess, might puzzle the most ingenious conjecturer. You see not the black silk apron, the smart cap, the neat and tidy gown of the grisette; the materials of their dress are silk or velvet, and they wear a leghorn bonnet. But the silk is faded, the velvet shows its thread, the leghorn bonnet has been evidently very long in service! Poverty shows itself throughout: and why cannot a simple plaid shawl and a printed cotton dress suffice to that poverty? Wherefore all this unsuccessful struggle to affect the appearance of better fortune?

Do you give it up? I will, in a word, explain at once all the mystery.

These young girls are Pupils of the Academy, and take their daily lesson in the lyrico-dramatic establishment that you see before you.

You understand now; you understand that matinal walk; you know what mean these "solféges," and these books; you can account for that peculiar dress, showing a strange mixture of indigence, affected finery, and bad taste. Almost all these young girls belong to families who have not a decided station in society: retired actors, painters, musicians, composers, sculptors, and the like indifferent artists, who on the stage, or bow or chisel in hand, have shown just talent enough to get their living, but not to acquire a name and an independence. Parents of this class, who, often, in their professional career, have lived side by side with eminent artists and mixed with superior society, are proud as upstarts, and will not be satisfied to resume their place in the sphere of life where they were born. They would be ashamed to see their daughters honestly engaged in any manual employment; they must be artists. Notaries, chemists, sheriff's officers, huissiers, transmit their business or their office to their children, and in the like manner our theatres must endure the infliction of hereditary mediocrities.

It would be a task much above our descriptive powers to enumerate that multifarious army of young females, to class its varieties, to mark out its striking individualities, and to sketch its leading characteristics. We shall only endeavour to portray some prominent features. We are limited by our worthy publisher to a very few pages; and our pencil lacks experience and vigour.

Attend to me, gentle reader.

Yonder young lady, of stately carriage and Roman majesty, who is approaching, followed at a short distance by her mother, calls herself Herminie Soufflot. From her infancy she affected great airs, and treated everybody around her most disdainfully;—hence she was proclaimed in her teens an eminent tragedian, and destined to the stage. At fifteen she was admitted to the "Conservatory," and exchanged her somewhat vulgar name of Jeannette for the more dramatic one of Herminie. Herminie exults already in her expectations of future glory. She looks down on our poor world with great contempt, and seems to commune exclusively with heroes and princesses of the ancient Melpomene. Her father, the German fluteplayer, and her mother, late shopkeeper in the Passage des Panoramas, now boxkeeper at the

Opera Comique, are lost in admiration before her. They bow, as if they were sovereign commands, to the least decisions of Herminie; with a single frown she makes the whole family tremble. Her father, the fluteplayer, is accustomed to say, when playing at dominoes in the evening at the Café Minerve, "Neighbour Mignot, you heard Herminie this morning, eh? How wonderfully she declaimed her monologue! What an eye, and what a Roman nose! It is a great pity that she did not live in the time of that joker Racine; he would not have cared much for Champmeslé!"

Herminie is always under some strong pre-occupation; she affects to be intensely absorbed by the art. She is told that the dinner is on the table, and she answers, with the air of a tragedy queen,—

Seigneur, dans cet aveu dépouillé d'artifice,
J'aime à voir que du moins vous vous rendiez justice.

"Herminie, it is now two o'clock, will you have a walk in the Tuileries with your cousin Fibochon?"

Herminie places her hand upon her heart, raises the other to heaven, and cries,—

Oui, vous l'aimez, perfide!
Et ces mêmes fureurs que vous me dépeignez,
Ces bras que dans le sang vous avez vus baignés,
Ces morts, cette Lesbos, ces cendres, cette flamme,
Sont les traits dont l'amour l'a gravé dans votre âme.

"She is mad," says cousin Fibochon.

"No, cousin," replies mother Soufflot, "don't you see that she is in the enthusiasm of *aspiration*.

Herminie is courted by several attorney's clerks, and as many draper's assistants, whom she keeps at a distance. Amongst these aspirant Lovelaces, she at last distinguishes one. He deserved her preference by his dark and thick hair, recalling to her mind that of the valiant Achilles. She allows him to appear occasionally on her passage, and to pick up her nosegay or her fan when she happens to drop them, but nothing beyond that. The tragic muse is a severe and proud virgin, who disdains the homage of simple mortals.

Herminie goes to evening parties in her neighbourhood. She is treated with great respect by the family of the hosier living at the corner of the street, and by that of the bill-broker, who occupies the first floor in her house. The theatre has so much attraction for the good folks of Paris! It is certainly not in Paris that comedians could now complain of any prejudice against them. It is enough to be connected with the green-room, in one way or another, to be invited, welcomed, courted. Even the prompter, the scene-shifters, and the hair-dressers attached to each theatre, have their share of public favour. They are treated with great kindness in the Faubourg St. Denis and the Rue du Temple. Everybody expects some interesting details upon the gentlemen and ladies of the theatre. At what hour does M. Francisque go to bed? What time does Mdlle. Théodorine require to put on her beautiful costume in the melo-drama of the "Manoir de Montlouvier?" And M. St. Ernest, does he eat like anybody else? Is it true that,

between the acts, Mdlle. George takes sorbets and ices, presented to her by three negro servants in grand livery?

It is easy to judge the wonderful sensation made by Mdlle. Herminie in these assemblies. When she condescends to read some verses, all mouths are wide open; the end of each passage is received with rounds of applause, and if the children are frightened and cry, they are immediately sent to bed without mercy; but when Mdle. Herminie is kind enough to play a scene from Bajazet, or Esther, all games are stopped, the most interesting conversations cease instantly, and the little dogs are called to the laps of the grandmammas for fear they should take a fancy to a bit of play with the cat of the house. Then the little drawing-room is divided into two parts; the one represents the stage, the other is left to the audience; the foot-lights are formed by a row of chairs, upon which tallow candles are placed. Herminie wraps herself in her French shawl, and her regular interlocutor, M. Michonneau, adjusts the hair of his fair wig.

M. Michonneau is an old clerk of the treasury, who has passed half of his life at the orchestra of the Comédie Française. He has always been extremely partial to the theatrical art, and it is to him a matter of great regret not to have been able, during his long career, to be introduced to one single play-actor. But he was obliged to attend to his office every day, from eight o'clock in the morning till five; then came the dinner; and in the evening the gentleman and the ladies of the Comédie Française went on the stage. Thus there was no means in the week of seeing them. On Sundays, M. Michonneau was free; but he had an extraordinary predilection for fishing, and he used to spend all his holydays in throwing his hook into the Marne, between St. Maur and Petit Brie. Observe now how M. Michonneau, arrived at the last period of his life, is proud of taking his part in theatrical amusements, of giving the cue to a young actress who is the hope of the French drama, and will be some day its glory. (Style of the professors of declamation at the Conservatory.)

Hush! Herminie is ready; she is in a convulsive agitation, like the Pythoness on her tripod. M. Michonneau advances with a timid step, and stands by her side; he will play Antiochus to the new Berenice. He is offered the book; but he answers with dignity, that he knows all the repertory by heart.

The greatest silence prevails. The master of the house himself, accustomed to snooze in a corner when his guests are playing all sorts of games, suspends his troublesome noise. Michonneau strikes the floor three times with his heels, and the performance begins.

Antiochus (Michonneau) has scarcely pronounced a few words, when his memory fails him; his hand moves slowly along the seam of his trousers, he scratches his forehead, and, after a considerable effort, he resumes his speech, but to lose it again. A general murmur, hardly repressed, is heard among the audience. Herminie stands like a victim; the mistress of the house takes pity upon the poor amateur, and brings him the book and a light. Michonneau, in a desperate fit, seizes the candle in one hand, the book in the other, and soon afterwards a shrill scream is heard in the room, immediately followed by many piercing shrieks. Michonneau, entirely pre-occupied by his part, has just carried the light near his temples, and set

on fire the curls of his fair wig. The conflagration has been rapid; but Madame Michonneau rushes on the stage, and wraps her husband's head in the skirt of her gown. A general desolation, tempered by some hilarity, pervades the audience. At last the dangerous trial is over: Michonneau is quite safe; his wig only has disappeared in the struggle.

It is impossible now to resume Berenice with the bare skull of Michonneau: it is given up. The audience, pacified by the misfortunes of Antiochus, console him with three rounds of applause, and begin again to play at various games. Herminie goes to pout in a corner; she cannot forgive Michonneau for having spoiled her *hits*, and promises to herself never again to throw away the treasures of her tragic muse before vulgar people, incapable of appreciating them (which does not prevent her from beginning again at the first opportunity.) The exuberantly-haired young clerk, whom she has distinguished among the aspirants to her hand, and who contrives to be invited to all parties where she goes, approaches her, and pays her the most flattering compliments; she calls him a silly fellow, and asks for her clogs.

At the Conservatory, Herminie is a great favourite with her professor. He repeats constantly, that she has the carriage of a queen, and he points her out as a model to her school-fellows.

We may easily foretel Herminie's fortune. Her professor, who plays some subordinate characters at the "Comédie Française," will obtain permission for her to appear on the stage of the "Rue de Richelieu." One Sunday she will play before a few friends, some relations, a numerous troop of hired claqueurs, and an audience having brought six pounds to the treasury. She will be much applauded, but she will have no engagement; and the manager will be quite right to decline her services; for Herminie is one of those precocious wonders who have neither heart nor passion, nor real enthusiasm; who know how to raise, at a given time, the right or the left arm;—well-regulated machines, but not admired by people of taste.

Herminie, disappointed in her high expectations, will complain of course of the wretched taste of the public; she will accuse the most eminent actresses of the "Comédie Française" of having intrigued against her; and she will go as far as to question the integrity or the chastity of the manager, the royal commissioner,* and the leading members of the company. She will in such a manner console herself for the defeat of her hopes; and, preparing herself for better chances, appeal from the Parisian audience to the spectators of the suburbs. In company with two or three other strolling players, without any fixed engagement, and with some amateurs sprung up from carpenters' and jewellers' shops, and who will have obtained a few days' leave—novice Britannicuses, Agamemnons and Pyrrhuses in embryo—she will travel triumphantly over the little towns that surround Paris. She will play Hermione at St. Germain, Iphigénie at Pontoise, Junie at Meaux, Roxane at St. Denis; and here is a specimen of her play-bills:—

* The Théâtre Français is under the superintendence of a Royal Commissioner.

THEATRE OF SAINT GERMAIN EN LAYE.

With the permission of the Mayor, and other civil and military authorities,

The company of the Children of Melpomene will have the honour to present this evening an extraordinary spectacle.

(FOR THE FIRST TIME AT THIS THEATRE.)

MITHRIDATE;

OR,

THE AGED KING AND HIS TWO SONS:

A Tragedy in Five Acts, by the late M. Racine,
of the French Academy.

Mademoiselle HERMINIE SOUFFLOT, PUPIL OF THE ROYAL CONSERVATORY, TO WHOM WAS AWARDED THE FIRST PRIZE OF PROFESSOR M * * *'s CLASS, *and of the "Comédie Française,"* will perform the character of *Monime.*

To be followed (also for the First Time) by

LES PLAIDEURS;

OR,

THE CONSEQUENCES OF LOVE OF LITIGATION:

A Comedy, in Three Acts, by the aforesaid late M. RACINE.

M. NARCISSE, of the Theatre of Carpentras, will perform the character of Dandin.

The following Interludes in the course of the evening.

Between the first and second acts of the Tragedy, Mademoiselle HERMINIE SOUFFLOT will sing *Man p'tit Pierre* and *la Folle de Grisar.*

Between the fourth and fifth acts of the Tragedy, Mademoiselle HERMINIE SOUFFLOT will dance the *Cachucha.*

Between the two pieces, a long-sword combat between Mademoiselle HERMINIE SOUFFLOT and M. NARCISSE.

Between the acts of the Comedy, various scenes of mummery, in which will be given imitations of the first artists of the capital. M. AUGUSTE will counterfeit M. ALPHONSE; M. VICTOR, Messrs. CHARLES and ALFRED.

THE PRICES WILL NOT BE RAISED. Children and gentlemen of the 7th Dragoons will be admitted at half-price.

Will you know what is for poor strolling actors the result of such an extraordinary performance? They must give free orders to the mayor and his deputies, to their families and their friends, to the members of the municipal body, to the gendarmes, the keeper of the borough, to the beadle, the collector of taxes, the clerk of the coach-office, the innkeeper and all his servants. Then the account of the tickets taken at the door and paid for is soon made up. You may see a few patrons of the arts in the boxes on the first tier, and in the lower circle two or three provincial geniuses; five or six dandies, who followed the young actress from Paris, parade their yellow gloves in the stage-box, and twenty labourers or fresh-water sailors are in the pit. It is hardly sufficient to pay the travelling expenses of the strolling company.

Herminie, as she is increasing in years and size, will get tired of these rare and unprofitable exhibitions before the audience of the suburbs. She now begins to think of her fortune and her name. At twenty-five years of age she will introduce herself to one of the theatrical agents, brutally nicknamed, by the dramatic gentry, dealers in human flesh, and obtain an engagement to perform, at Rouen or Bourdeaux, the queens in tragedy, the first characters in modern dramas, and the "grandes coquettes" in comedy. As Molière, Corneille, Racine, and Marivaux, are rather out of favour in our beautiful France, and the public of the principal towns will have the ballet first and next the opera, and the drama only as an accessory, she will play a hundred times "La Tour de Nesle, "La Chambre Ardente," and all the pieces of M. Anicet Bourgeois. Such a hard task will soon wear out her physical power; she will fall gradually from the resident companies of the great towns into the itinerant bands of the small cities; and, as she will be still handsome, and has been always irreproachable in her conduct, she will at last marry a recruiting captain at Carcassone, or an exciseman at Clermont en Auvergne. Then, on the front of the new cottage, where she will enjoy her tranquil existence, the following words might be written:—

"Here lies Herminie Soufflot, Pupil of the Academy, &c."

Make way—make may,—there is Fretillon coming! Fretillon was a florist; but after having many times seen Dejazet and heard Achard, she took an extraordinary fancy for the stage; was admitted to the Conservatory, through the interest of the portress of the establishment—her own aunt. Her pert looks and well-shaped ankle succeeded there admirably, and she bid fair to be, some day,

"Un peu trop forte en gueule et trop impertinente!"

On her admission, she was immediately classed in the "*Tabliers.*"* She studied the characters of Dorine, Madelon, Lisette, Fanchon, all the waiting-maids of Marivaux—all the servants of Molière. She would undoubtedly have made wonderful progress in her profession, had it not been for her excessive partiality to rides on donkeys at Montmorency, drives in the Bois de Boulogne, in hired cabs, elegant dress, and snug pic-nics.

Her *début* at the "Comédie Française" will not be more successful than that of Herminie Soufflot. The editor of a newspaper, who, upon the recommendation of

* The technical term applied in France to the class of characters that answers to our "soubrettes."

a friend, takes some interest in her, will say that she gives promises of future talent, and that is all. But, be not afraid to lose her: she will not, like Herminie Soufflot, bury herself in a country town. Fretillon to leave Paris! Fretillon no longer to see the Boulevart Montmartre, to sup at the Café Anglais, to parade her dresses in the stage boxes at all the theatres, and her graces and her costly lace at the Concerts Musard! No, no, indeed: Fretillon will stay in Paris. She will turn to account her studies at the Conservatory, to play the "amoureuses" at some minor theatre; and she will be long the pride and joy of literary and fashionable lions.

What is that group whence come flourishes, shakes, and roulades? This is the singing-school. All these young ladies dream of a début at the "Grand Opera," and are disturbed in their sleep by the success of Falcon and Damoreau. How many among them will begin by a miserable failure, and be obliged to go to Angers or Bayonne to play the part of *Dugazon!*—too happy, if, in their misfortune, they are not reduced to accept an engagement in those strolling bands, where the *prima donna* sings, in the same evening, the part of Rosina, and declaims the long lamentations of the heroine in the new melodrama!

Let us now say a few words of the interesting division of pianists. The pianists! Try to count them: they are as numerous as the stars in the firmament. Is there one house where a piano, indifferent or bad, might not be found in some corner? Who is the mother who denies herself the pleasure of having the piano taught to her daughter? Where is the young lady, aspiring to the connubial state, who cannot tolerably run her fingers over the keys of a piano?

At the Conservatory, there is this peculiarity in the division of pianists, that it is not exclusively composed of children belonging to those families of dubious standing that we have already described, or of those pupils whose precocious talent shows at once decided avocations; but it contains also many young ladies of the middle class, and whose parents are in easy circumstances. This may be easily explained. The citizen who has now-a-days a matter-of-fact propensity for calculation, says to himself, "I pay fifteen or twenty pounds per annum taxes; it is out of the taxes that government provides for all the expenses of the Conservatory, where the best masters are engaged, and the most perfect methods of teaching are adopted; therefore, I have an undoubted right to send my daughter Lily to the Conservatory, to learn the piano, that my wife and myself are so fond of. It will, besides, save the expense of a master at home, and, in fact, reduce so far the amount of my taxes."

Is it not a deep calculation? The citizen, who is juryman, elector, captain in the National Guard, and much respected in his parish, will easily obtain his daughter's admission to the Royal School; and, consequently, when you go perchance in the evening to your grocer's, to buy a lucifer-box, your are sure to hear in the back-parlour the romance of "Guido" played on the piano.

The pianists of the Academy are the pride of their parents, the joy of the family parties, the attraction of the concerts at two shillings the ticket, and the plague of the unfortunate neighbours who live in the same house.

We should be guilty of serious offence, if we were to omit the sketch of the harpist. At the Conservatory, she is alone in her class; and when, at the distribu-

tion of prizes, the Secretary of State recommends to the young pupils a noble emulation, she has no occasion to follow the advice. A new harpist succeeds every ten years to the harpist who retires; but two harpists were never known to be together at the Conservatory; and, as perfection is very difficult to attain, and requires a long practice, it happens that the harpist, who was in the flower of her youth when she entered the Royal School, is often grey-haired when she leaves it, and has thus devoted her existence to an ill-fated instrument, in which she is hardly proficient. However, she has a capital resource for her old age: as the harp requires graceful attitudes, her practice enables her to get her living by sitting to the painters in their studios. The harpists are admirable types for a Corinne at Cape Misenum.

The harpist's name is Eloa: she wears a white dress, a blue sash with long ends, and curled hair. Her soul is as pure as the azure of the purest sky; her eye wanders about uncertain; inspiration resides in her large and radiant forehead. She is always in the clouds, above the realities of this world; her only worldly weakness is her passion for the cakes sold at the corner shop, near the Gymnase.

It would be indeed a difficult task to explain why the superintendents of the dramatic art, in France, have thought fit in their wisdom to separate the dancing-school from the school of declamation and the singing-school. The dancing-school and its various classes are an appendage of the "Académie Royale de Musique," and placed under the immediate jurisdiction of M. Duponchel, the manager of the Grand Opera. We cannot help thinking, that there is not much propriety in throwing young girls from their childhood into the unwholesome agitation of the green-room; but it would be out of place to assume here the stern language of a moralist: we shall confine ourselves to remarking, that the progress, as well as the harmony, of the three branches of the scenic instruction, would certainly be improved by their being united in the same establishment, under the same direction.

It is our pleasure to unite what has been separated by our rulers; and to complete this sketch, we shall make an attempt at the rapid picture of the young pupils of the dancing-school. Here we have quite different physiognomies, and quite a new people.

Have you never heard of that colony of young and pretty women who form the population of a certain part of the Chaussée d'Antin? One fine summer evening, in the Rues Notre Dame de Lorette, de Bréda, de Navarin, and in the various other streets that industrious speculators have just built, as by enchantment, on the height of St. George, all the windows are mysteriously open, and successively occupied by many pretty faces, many smiling lips, many delightful figures, and many beautiful eyes—blue, dark, hazel: long ringlets are softly moved by the undulations of the wind, and tiny white hands are shown to the best advantage, relieved by the grey colour of half-open Venetian blinds. At first sight, it would not require strong imaginative powers to fancy that you have caught an unexpected view of Mahomet's paradise.

Of these beauties, some are choristers of minor theatres, others are dancers at the Grand Opera, some grisettes employed by the most fashionable milliners, and the rest ladies of leisure. None of them have money in the funds, yet they dine at

Very's, sup at the Café Anglais, never walk in the streets, are dressed in the best style, and enjoy all the luxuries of life.

And whence come these amiable ladies, as they style themselves? Few are offspring of the working-classes of Paris; many owe their existence to the country. When, at Strasbourg or Bayonne, a young and pretty girl has listened with too much confidence to some provincial Lovelace, or to a handsome officer garrisoned in the place, as soon as she begins to fear the inquisitive eye of her kind neighbours, she quietly takes a place in the diligence, and goes to hide herself in Paris, that great populous desert. There her education is soon completed, and presently she shines among the fashionable lions. And the child? Why, as long as the offspring of her first error is in its tenderest youth, the mother keeps it shut up in some boarding-school in the neighbourhood, and goes occasionally to give it some kisses, mingled with tears. But years elapse—the child grows. If it is a boy, he flies early away without leave, and becomes non-commissioned officer in the Lancers, strolling actor, commercial traveller for some spirit merchant, or perhaps first dentist of his majesty the emperor of China, for the benefit of decayed teeth in the departments of La Creuse and du Loiret. He very seldom troubles his respectable mother with his letters, except perhaps to beg, in the name of her maternal love, some current coin of the realm. The mother feels no regret for the absence of her prodigal son, and she never mentions him to her acquaintances of both sexes.

But if she have a daughter, then it is quite a different thing. She is not jealous of her, as certain mothers among the "bourgeoises" used to be. No: she has loved and beloved quite enough to appreciate, to their just value, passion, pleasures, and men. She has nothing to fear; she feels no envy on that score. It is of a brilliant life that she dreams at present. After her life of luxury and enjoyments, she is afraid of nothing more than poverty; she has been unable to make her fortune, and she wants her daughter, her dear Corinne, to make one. Patronized by her mother's friends among the diplomatic body, Corinne is admitted to the dancing-school of the "Académie Royale de Musique." There she finds all the daughters of her mother's friends—Neala de St. Rémy, Lisida de Barville, Antonia de St. Amaranthe, Maria de Bligny, Fenella de St. Victor, &c. There she learns the Cachuca, and all the science of love. Her mother follows her progress with an anxious admiration; she praises everywhere the precocious development of her forms, the perfection of her pirouettes, her fair complexion and her graceful ankles, the beauty of her features and the poetry of her dance. To obtain permission for her début, she is unremitting in her attentions to all the powers of the Opera, from the porter up to the ballet-master. At last, the great day is at hand. Corinne has entered her fifteenth year, and is to make her first appearance by a pas de trois in a favourite ballet. All the little fairies of the Rue Notre Dame de Lorette, all the dandies of the jockey-club, hasten to the Opera. The gracefulness and the pirouettes of Corinne have a wonderful success. The fashion adopts the new star as it rises in the horizon. Fifteen days after, Corinne may be seen driven in an elegant equipage, with her protector, her mother, and her mother's lover.

But all the pupils of the dancing school are not as lucky as Corinne. Many of them are left unheeded among the cloisters, and reduced to play for ever subordinate

Sylphides. It is almost invariably the consequence of a first inclination ill directed. They have been weak enough to fall in love with law-students whom they met at the Ranelagh, or German musicians, who threatened to make away with themselves. To raise these fallen angels, it requires no less than an influential journalist or a cosmopolite banker.

The dancing-master's physiognomy, at the "Académie Royale de Musique," is rather a curious one. When a dancer, after thirty years of loyal services, has lost his elasticity, and cannot any longer spring from the ground—when he is tired, worn out, foundered, he becomes a professor. The dancing-school is to him what Greenwich hospital is to disabled sailors. He writes on his cards, "Polydore Larchet, late first dancer at the 'Académie Royale de Musique,' dancing-master at the Académie Royale de Musique."

Polydore Larchet is a little man, who walks with his head upright, his foot bent, and his arms gracefully bowed. He wears a fair wig, a light-blue dress coat, yellow inexpressibles quite tight, and thin shoes at all seasons. He is a faithful adherent to the classical style of dancing, and makes, but with reluctance, some concessions to new methods. He will, on all occasions, remind you that he has had the honour of dancing at Erfurth before their majesties the Emperors Alexander and Napoleon, and that the great ladies of the day were delighted with his personation of the river Scamander. He takes off his hat when the name of Vestris is pronounced in his presence, and maintains that Louis XIV. was the greatest king we ever had, because he was the most elegant dancer of his time.

But you should see M. Polydore Larchet in his school: his cold dignity is admirable; he never gets impatient, and always uses the most select expressions. When he addresses his pupils, even the youngest, he invariably employs the most polite forms. "Mdlle. Julia, will you be so good as to turn out your toes. Mdlle. Amanda, do have the kindness to raise a little more your left arm." Polydore is the last representative of French gallantry.

But nobody wants dancers; they are proscribed in the name of taste, and, ere long, the art will be cultivated only by the fairer half of the world. The dancing-master at the Académie Royale de Musique will presently disappear from the collection of national caricatures. It was, indeed, quite time to draw his picture.

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Now, if you want to know how many first-rate artists come out every year from the Conservatory, let us go successively to all the theatres of Paris: Rachel, Duprez, Frederick Lemaître, are not pupils of the Conservatory. We only mention the fact, and will not run the risk of lulling you asleep by a discussion which, for us, would be productive of only painful recollections.



THE ARTISTS' FRIEND.

BY FRANCIS WEY.



QUITE a model for indolence was our friend Badoulot, when we were schoolboys together at the College of Poligny. The masters, however, never punished him; for he knew how to render them a host of little services, such as fetching their pocket-handkerchief or their snuff-box, or putting wood into the stove, or opening their books in the proper place, when the classes came up for lessons. He was always behind the others, as well in the play-ground as in the school-room; but he chattered well upon every subject, although he could put nothing into practice.

The two *élèves* invested with the dignity of chorister-boys for the College Chapel, were objects of his especial attention; and, when dressed in the gown and surplice, were never suffered to be out of his sight. If a regiment passed through the town, none so curious as he to see it march by; but the gay show produced upon him an effect perfectly different to that which it produced on us. A battalion of the Guards, which filed down the College street one Thursday, brought about a revolution in our tastes and amusements which lasted for several weeks. The whole aspect of the establishment was changed; and the new order of things might be traced upon



THE ARTIST'S FRIEND.

the very walls, where cross-hilted sabres, and moustachioed warriors, chalked in different directions, replaced the fat-faced *abbés*, with their conical caps, which we used to sketch there, looking like so many pumpkins, each surmounted by a dice-box. Sometimes even a timid hand would venture, with seditious crayon, to make a rough draught of the form of the "Usurper's" hat. There was a considerable consumption of paper at that time, for the construction of cocked hats; and a whole forest of broomsticks was put in requisition for the fabrication of sabres. One great division formed itself into regiments, and nominated its captains and its general, until, at last, the spirit of imitation had transformed the whole school into a barrack. Badoulot, however, never enrolled himself, or at most, attached himself only to the *suite*. Although he looked upon the schoolboy troops with as much curiosity as those of King Louis, he had no desire to form one of them. He soon, however, made up to "the General," talked with him upon military tactics, and became his inseparable companion,—almost his slave. Upon such matters, as well as about everything else, he had always plenty to discourse; but in putting his theories into practice, his talents dwindled away, and his intentions fell powerless. He was fond of reading; but he read without method, arrangement, or discernment, so that his mind was tricked out like a Harlequin's jacket.

During the three years we passed under the drawing-master, Badoulot never made the smallest progress. He commenced a hundred different subjects, and never terminated one. Not a nose of Raphael's, David's, or Gerard's, but passed through his hands; but he went no further. The rest of his time was employed in giving his advice to the first boy in the class, who had got to draw from busts, to cut his pencils for him, and knead him little bullets for rubbing out. Badoulot's merit was one of a very singular description. In any argument about art, he unhorsed the very cleverest; and the master himself grew pale before his force of reasoning. In fact, so much knowledge, such a profusion of ideas, such perfect notions upon every subject, did our fellow-pupil display, that it was the general saying, "Oh, Badoulot is an idle fellow; but if he chose ——;" and Badoulot used to say to himself, "Oh, if I chose ——." But, alas! he never did choose.

The efforts made to inspire him with emulation were incredible, but it was labour lost. Our young friend, with all his admiration for what was beautiful, and for those who knew how to execute it, had no desire to imitate them himself. He displayed the liveliest sympathy without the slightest vocation. He contrived, however, to finish his College studies; and, at that period, knew the names of more illustrious authors and celebrated painters than all of us put together. He was acquainted, also, with the titles and forms of a multitude of books, and talked immensely, and with much vehemence.

We tenderly bid each other adieu, at the College gates, before crossing the threshold of life. More than a year went by; and, as I passed through Dijon, the native town of my former schoolfellow, I again met Badoulot. He explained to me the indigestible nature of the provincial atmosphere; declared that he was suffocating within the city walls for want of air (we were standing in the great square); expounded that the whole place was exclusively embellished with idiots, without even excepting his worthy father; and protested that he expected, before long, to

die. I pronounced the word "Paris," and the big tears started into his eyes. He confessed to me that he only awaited the hour when he should come of age to give himself an attitude in the world. "*Nous autres!*" he exclaimed, "spirits like ours require independence." His *nous autres* alarmed me: this hint at "kindred spirits" gave me the idea that my friend Badoulot had involved himself in some masonic society, of mysterious as well as culinary design. His *nous autres* reminded me, at the same time, of the exclusive "we" of the *parvenu* affecting airs of nobility, to whom the Marquis de Créqui replied, "What I think most *singular* in you is your *plural*."

We were still engaged together in "melancholy but energetic conversation," when all on a sudden I saw him assume an expression of respect, mingled with admiration. He lowered his voice, pressed my arm, and, with a confidential wink, directed my attention to a passer-by.

A long, queer-looking devil it was, encased in a loose gingerbread-coloured great-coat, with a rusty brown velvet collar; and with a pair of boots on his feet, most tragically cracked in sundry places. A pair of gloomy-looking eyes rolled beneath the undulating brim of a napless white hat, whilst the hollow notes of a doleful air wound their way out of his throat, through the quill of a toothpick, which he was champing between his teeth.



"Look there," said Badoulot, with an air of reverential humility, "that's Monsieur Saint Eugène, the first bass-singer of our theatre, an astonishing man, whose merits failed to be appreciated at Paris, at Quimper, at Romorantin, at Montargis, at Epinal, and at Pezenas. He will give you the full *contre-ut* after dinner, and the *si-flat* fasting."

With that he pulled off his hat, and bowed to the ground; but as the famous "bass" gave no signs of recognition, and my old schoolfellow had been boasting of his intimate acquaintance, he hastily explained that "Saint Eugène was very short-sighted." He blushed, however, up to the eyes; and, as we continued our walk, he gave me some very minute details about the "lives and adventures" of several members of the Dijon troop,—leading me, all the while, as if unintentionally, down a little lane, by which, judging by the direction taken by his friend "the bass," I had reason to conjecture that my companion hoped to cut across the actor's path, in order to see him pass once more.

"Well," he exclaimed, on taking leave of me in the yard of the diligence-office, "you will be *there* the first; but in a few months —— of age —— and then they shall see what I can do."

I still fancied that he had some evil design in his head; and replied, "Jean, my good fellow, be cautious. What is it that you mean to do?"

"I know not," exclaimed he, "but time will show. I have that there," he continued, giving himself an enormous blow of the fist upon his forehead, that sounded

like an empty barrel, "which consumes me. Forth it must. What it is I cannot tell, but the world will know when my head brings forth."

I wished him "a good deliverance;" and, congratulating myself upon having a schoolfellow who promised so enormously, I departed for the capital, where I passed six years, without hearing even the name of my friend Jean. At the conclusion of this lapse of time, my porter gave me, on coming home one day, a visiting card, upon which, in superb Gothic letters, were these two no less Gothic names,— **Jehans Badoulot.**

I needed no further demonstration that our friend had become a Genius, and that very evening hastened to call upon him. He was not at home; and I followed him to the house of Baron ———, our mutual friend.

In the midst of ten or a dozen celebrities of the day, more or less celebrated, I found my friend Badoulot lying in a vast arm-chair, *à la Henri II.*, his legs elevated above his head, and his arms hanging down on either side, talking, discussing, replying, arguing, explaining, preaching, and professing, with the tone of a pasha, and a *nonchalance* and abundance perfectly astonishing. The conversation turned on the arts, on music, and poetry, all hashed up together. Three poets, and as many well-known composers, were there, listening, with extraordinary deference, to Badoulot, who beat them all hollow in argument. It would have been impossible to treat a question of art better; and all these great practitioners were pigmies by his side. An unexperienced spectator would have taken him merely for a "carpet" critic; but from the energy which inspired him, the wild look of his eyes, the dishevelled nature of his discourse, his head of hair, and the perspiration which trickled down his peaked beard on to his waistcoat *à la Barnave*, and his black velvet coat, of a cut perfectly fabulous, one might have easily recognized an artist; and, what is more, a great artist!



As soon as he perceived me, he shook me violently by the hand, shouted me a sonorous "*bon jour*," like a man rejoicing in a large expanse of chest and a plenitude of force, and then resumed his gargling. The subject before him at the moment was statuary, and I had every reason to believe that he was become a great sculptor. I changed my opinion, however, as soon as he spoke of poetry; he laid down the law with so much *aplomb*, that I no longer doubted he had become a poet. But five minutes afterwards it was just as easy to see that my friend was no less admirable a composer. He was a universal prodigy! As to the technical "slang" of the trade, he was a complete master of it. Figures, counterpoints, canons, were familiar terms in his mouth: a blue *sky*, I heard, was a cobalt *ground*, tinted with lake; and in his admiration of a bushy foreground, covered with shadow, we were informed how the bistres were worked up, and rubbed in, and warmed up, and the brushwood touched in, &c. &c.

The sole conversation of the evening was of art and artists: the existence of the rest of the world was unacknowledged; and, by the time we took leave, Badoulot had shown himself so general in special excellence, that, not being able to divine in which of the sciences he was a practitioner, and not daring to address him a question upon the subject, which would have revealed a most impertinent ignorance, I left him unenlightened.

A gentleman had accompanied us to the door, who, during the whole evening, had not uttered two words of note. This dull personage continued the same route with me, and I endeavoured to find fodder in him for my curiosity with respect to Badoulot. "Persons of the nature of your friend," replied my companion, "ought properly to be born rich. These men of words, but not of action, of theories without practice, of high-sounding incapacity, fasten upon your artists like horse-flies upon cattle. Gifted with a certain taste for art, but without any real ardent sympathy, and deprived of all power of fecundity, or 'calling,' as lovers of the arts, they form a numerous band of mere shadows, who give back with their lips the impressions received by their eyes. But nothing goes beyond. If such people are poor, they turn colour-grinders, prompters to a theatre, or *figurants* at the Opera. If they are rich, *millionaires*, princes, or ministers, they become the judges and protectors of art—Colberts upon a small scale—Mæcenases in miniature—"pocket" Leos the Tenth. If, like your friend, they possess an honourable competency, they couple up their uninspired genius with the talent of some practitioner, whom they never quit. The arts are their only occupation: the whole world, in their eyes, is peopled only with great men, whilst they themselves become great men by frictionary contact, as it were, or incubation. These fetishes treat all questions of art to admiration—a talent generally excelled in by those who never have done anything, and never will do. If you ask what they are?—they are 'Artists' Friends,' or rather hangers-on—stockbrokers of talent. They have no other position in society.

"When the 'Artists' Friend,'" continued my informant, "finds the weight of years upon his back,—and by that time, from always repeating the same thing, he has remained far behind the general progress,—his enthusiasm diminishes, the rigour of his principles is softened down, his own boldness intimidates him, his wings droop featherless, his talons lose their claws, and he melts gradually down into a universal fondness. At the mere name of 'art' or 'artist,' he falls about your neck and embraces you; and he sheds tears at the sight of his grandnephew's first 'rose.' In a word, when once worn out, and worth nothing more, the Friend of the Arts becomes an excellent man in his way, and makes a good *cicisbeo* for fifty-year-old actresses, or an indifferent picture-dealer. If he has any fortune still left, he makes himself friends by his kitchen and his wine-cellar. Such, Sir, is your friend's destiny, placed in the best possible light. *Au revoir*, and good night."

Since that day I have frequently met my friend Badoulot, and followed all his transformations with attention, admiring his numerous and individual excellences. It is really sad to think to what a frightful extent this error (inwardly produced by a series of miscarriages) multiplies itself when once the supremacy of "thought" has dethroned all else.

My friend Badoulot, in fact, has become a being of very multifarious nature: sometimes he turns critic, and esconces himself behind the battery of the newspapers, so generally infested by abortive painters or uninspired musicians. These literary geniuses of a novel species have adopted a most deplorable slang, and created a vocabulary of their own, the basis of which is the horrible word "artistic." "The Artists' Friend" is loquacious and authoritative, and, far from being the satellite of your celebrated men, he establishes himself as a planet by their side. It is he who preaches the doctrines of which these celebrities of their day are only practical examples, and it is himself that he admires in their works. In these times of general speculation, he is not very disinterested, and manages, without much ado, to lay hands upon a collection of pencil and water-colour drawings, sketches, and autographs.

There is not a painter who has not to undergo the obsequious impertinences of my friend Badoulot, and similar brokers in the arts. The quantity of these cattle-flies becomes frightful. How many there are in the world, who, on quitting their desk, or their public office, take a pride in calling your great men by their christian names, or addressing them, as loud as they can, by the familiar "tu," or recounting some trifling details of their life, in order to appear their intimate friends. Impossible to escape from their ridiculous questions, their impertinent requests, their stupid observations, their misplaced praises—more irritating still than their criticisms, and their disputes upon points involving your most intimate convictions—all brought forward in order to make a parade of their own prodigious judgment, their marvellous aptitude, and their incredible "vocation" for the arts! I know a sculptor, who, during a whole winter, fled from house to house to avoid one of these dear friends of the arts, obstinately bent upon insinuating himself into his intimacy, under the recommendation of a host of *names*, which he intitled his "very good friends," and "brothers in kindred feeling." Our sculptor had at last escaped from his "bore," and lost sight of him, when, on setting off one day upon a journey, he found him in the diligence by his side. An "artistic" dissertation was opened upon the spot, and the sculptor had exhausted his whole stock of monosyllables, when, not knowing what to do, he turned to his persecutor, and, showing him on the seat opposite them a fat dealer in wools, who had half hidden his soul-less physiognomy under a black cotton nightcap, whispered in his ear, "Look at that fat old fellow opposite, so simply dressed; that's M. de Lamartine, who is travelling *incognito*. Pretend as if you did not know it."

"You don't say so," replied 'the bore.' "To be sure! I now recollect him. He is grown very stout: however, there is no mistaking him."

Thanks to this subterfuge, our sculptor was delivered from all further annoyance, to the great inconvenience of the fat dealer in wools, against whom the friend of the arts directed all the wit and attic salt of his conversation. The inspired tone of the one contrasted admirably with the heavy dulness of the other, all which the former explained by the poet's wish to remain incog.; and during twenty leagues the sculptor listened to this burlesque colloquy with a gravity perfectly Germanic.

In spite of certain disagreeable qualities, almost insupportable at times, my friend Badoulot has his good side: he avoids politics like the plague, and in that he differs

from another species of the "Artists' Friend," which is the most adroit of all. It is composed of men who have tolerably extensive connexions, and who make a profession of crying up rising merit, of venerating the "ancients," and, in fact, of furiously admiring everything and everybody. They are the politest and humblest creatures in the world. Although continually giving their judgment, their criticisms are always well received, seeing that they never fail of being favourable. They encourage the arts, not with their purse, but with their counsels; and it is a matter beyond dispute, that they are always considered the "big guns" of connoisseurship. The acquisition of a few daubs completes their reputation, and, all at once, they are invested with a name known throughout all France, which represents—nothing at all.

The main object of their career is to obtain—no difficult matter—some trifling mission, the object of which is connected with history or architecture, or anything else: they then come back with a title, take up a position between those in power (of the paying department) and their friends the artists, so that all the money which passes from the one down to the other goes through their hands; and gluey enough are their fingers—and they make themselves fortunes no one knows how.

Reputations are thus formed, and inflated more and more, until they become of European celebrity; when, one fine day, this great machine, which rises to the sky so round and superb, gets a crack; it bursts like a balloon—nothing comes out but wind—and all that remains in your hands has not even the worth of a bubble. This species of "The Artists' Friend," is sharp enough, and it has been too little studied in general; for, as these good people, behind their airs of universal benevolence, have their secret hates, their exclusive predilections, their prejudices and their interests, they are very frequently detrimental to the art, and deprive real merit of its recompense, in order to gorge their creatures, or the toadies of their caprices.

"The Artists' Friend," on a lower scale, often puts himself into a state of vassalage to an individual whose theories he developes, and whose ideas he explains.



Excepting this one person, all else with him go by the name of "crétin,"—idiot—saving, indeed, the dead, who serve as points of comparison. The painter, however, has no more devoted servant. This kind of familiar arranges his pallet, puts the wood into the stove, undertakes all delicate commissions, and pays the necessary visits to the newspaper critics; and, after all, solicits no other recompense than the honour of seeing his own head sketched every year in the back-ground of a picture. After a day employed in fluttering hither and thither, he will tell you at night, "*We* have worked hard to-day; *our* sky is finished—*our* grounds are rubbed in—*our* figures are sketched out—&c." He is overwhelmed with fatigue, and delighted with the day's work, and far happier

than the painter himself, who generally has only the advantage of the first of these sensations.

In the provinces, the "Artists' Friend," or, in other words, the hanger-on of the theatrical troop, is a lieutenant, or a lawyer, or a lawyer's clerk, or a liquor-merchant, or the banker's son, or a coffee-house-keeper; but in any case, he has strong lungs and strong arms. In friendships like these the heart palpitates in the stomach, and the "fraternal cup" is never spared. The idolized cock-boats of Thespis receive the proffered sympathy with airs of dignified condescension, and none so proud as your *bourgeois*, when he finds himself mixed up in all their petty passions. The rivalry between the singing *soubrette* and the *prima donna* causes an infinity of disputes, unless, indeed, the "singing gentleman" of the troop has prudently confiscated the latter to his own use, as is usual in French theatrical politics.

French provincial comedians, in general, have preserved a sort of gipsey, wandering, romantic, patriarchal manner, which renders them far more entertaining than those of Paris, who become day by day more tiresomely "respectable." For some years past, however, an alarming symptom of that moral malady, which has deprived the comedians of the capital of their "colour," has displayed itself among those of the departments. This prosaic desire for consideration and respect gains ground among them: they aspire to the rights of the *bourgeoisie*, and the "Artists' Friend" is in their eyes an object of utility, as a sort of *chaperon*, whom they select from among the "crack people" of the town, and then bow to, flatter, and cajole, because he serves as a pedestal to mount them up to a level with the gentry of the place. Thanks to this officious patron, the actor is able to boast of his initiation into "all that is genteel," of being run after by "the very best society," and of having been "literally torn to pieces" by all the "ladies of rank and fashion" in every town where he has appeared upon the boards.

When he does not happen to roost upon the top of society's ladder, the "Artists' Friend" in the dramatic line, in the provinces, is obliged, in order to give himself the necessary elevation, to create himself a factitious importance, by bolstering himself out with connexions of weight. If it be in a garrison town, the task is easy. The "Artists' Friend" is generally the friend of "the officers:" his moustachio sprouts beneath the shade of theirs; and proud he is upon a review-day of marching arm in arm with a red-pantalooned captain, marking the step with all the energy of his heels. It is a well-known fact, that the French "warrior bold" is an object of great veneration, and even fear, in the eyes of the provincial actor. The mutual friend of Mars and Apollo is, consequently, charged with the introductions between the *artistes* and the military: he has his *entrées* everywhere, is the pet of the *soubrette*, can do what he will with the actress "who does the sentimental young ladies," and would venture, upon a pinch, to present an officer or two to the first singing lady. These advantages give him a certain standing at the barracks and the *Grand Café*, whilst his familiar intercourse with "the officers," of whom he makes a grand parade in the green-room, during the rehearsals, stamps him a young man of *ton* among the actors. About a fortnight after the opening of the yearly theatrical campaign, sounds the hour of triumph for the "Artists' Friend." He has the honour of introducing a captain and a lieutenant, his *protégés*, two veritable friends

both of the bottle and the drama, into the sanctuary, where, before the drawing up of the curtain, strut the Duke de Guise or Zampa, Lucullus or Jeannot, Richelieu or Monsieur Cagnard. With an air at once debonair and chivalrous, he presents his military gentlemen to his gentlemen "of the sock and buskin:" he is admitted, thanked, and congratulated; he is the great man of the day—the man who comprehends "art," and knows how to encourage it—and during the whole evening, he gloriously immolates the vulgar public as *bourgeois*, *épicier*, or *pékin*. After all, there exists a great natural similitude between the military man and the provincial actor. Both wander from town to town, year by year—both at the same time full of independence, and yet bound to servitude—both in pursuit of vain glory, although by very different roads.

Your friend of the arts and artists may generally be recognized by the manner in which he exaggerates the habits, manners, and appearance of the objects of his affections. His hat is more pyramidal, his cravat, to use the phraseology of the day, more "convulsive," his shirt-collar more turned down, his beard more *moyen age*, and his waistcoat more widely opened on his chest than those of the *artiste*. His furniture gives his rooms the look of a broker's shop; and he sleeps in a carved bed, all bristling with horribly pointed arabesques, where, if he were to move during his sleep, he would never wake again, as he would be sure to fracture his skull. His buffets of the time of Clodion le Chevelu utter hyena cries every time they are opened; and he possesses a two-handed sword of the "Boar of Ardennes," fabricated for six francs (for which he paid sixty,) out of an ex-bar of the iron gate in the Place Royal, so cruelly pulled down. The "Artists' Friend" has an utter contempt for his boot-maker, and his tailor, and his valet, and his grocer, and even his wine-merchant: according to his ideas, every man should devote himself to art and artists, and to nothing else—beyond the sphere of the arts there is nothing. Among those of the trade, however, he esteems only one,—the chosen one,—according to his dictum, "the first genius of the age."

The "Artists' Friend" proceeds with uniformity in the commencement of his career, and the leading features of his origin are the same—a lively imagination, with unsettled tastes, and without activity, order, or power of imitation—the same, in fact, as in my friend Badoulot, who is a good example of the rule. But after a certain number of years, and aberrations of various kinds, very distinct differences manifest themselves—as many, indeed, in the several tastes, as there are *artistes* of different kinds in France.

There are a set of old gentlemen in Paris, who may often be met with in the Tuileries, with an eye still beaming in the midst of a pale, withered, mask-like face, all furrowed with longitudinal wrinkles. These young sparks of a bygone age are carefully dressed up in the fashion of the morrow, and have infinite trouble in breathing within the walls of their tightened coat, which seems determined on giving their aged form an air of adolescence in spite of all the resistance of the carcase. The good gentlemen may be seen wriggling along the Allée des Feuillans, supporting themselves firmly, but hypocritically, upon canes which are really stronger than they seem, and giving themselves all the fascinating airs of persons walking upon eggs. An eye-glass hangs from their neck, which is carefully bolstered



up in a high black cravat of the fashion of the Directory, intended to conceal the flaccid undulations of the skin about the regions of the lower jaw. Under a hat, exempt from all reproach, they contrive, by dint of pulling and twisting, to collect in tufts on either side of the face, a few hairs borrowed no one can tell whence. Those which come to life on the back of the neck are obliged to voyage over two thirds of the occipital sphere, and expire in scattered meagreness upon the frontal deserts. Every resource is employed; every weak side defended: and every day the skilful general draws up his few remaining troops upon the open head. These creatures of a nameless age, and even problematical sex, so completely has their first hoar-frost been tweezered out, when once vamped up, and tricked out, and befrizzled, walk about as stiff as posts, like puppets upon wires or galvanised mummies, hawking about their eternal smile, stereotyped upon a double set of Pernet's best false teeth.

Let us follow one of these originals from one o'clock in the day—his hour of rising. After a short walk, he betakes himself to a reading-room; when he has turned over the papers of the day, he takes a second little walk, followed by a visit to the pastry cook's, and then betakes himself to some club, where he finds nobody but one of the servants. He then commences a new assassination of his time until the hour of dinner, after which he makes a lengthy nap in a café. During every minute of the day the poor man has yawned; all the symptoms of the heaviest, the densest *ennui* have passed in shadows over his face: his very back-bone bends under the weight of his *ennui*, and his legs quiver like reeds beneath it.

Eight o'clock strikes, and he wakes up, shakes off the lead which weighed him down, pulls his rounded false collar up to his ears, combs on to his occiput the lost hair that is scattered back in his hat, smiles blandly and caressingly at himself, and rushes joyously out of the café, humming an air of some old opera.

This good man only lives during four hours—not of his day but of his night. He is the friend of the actors and actresses of "the good old times," and of certain tragic authors now become scarce, whose species are disappearing from the earth like the mammoth, but who may yet be found with their feet already half buried in the tomb, and their head still preserved in the spirit jar of the French Academy.

On leaving his café, he consequently turns his steps either to the *foyer* of the Théâtre Français, or to the house of some actor retired from the stage, or to that of some hexametrical ex-celebrity, where he finds a few crumbling fragments of classic columns, a few shades of Achilles or Agamemnon, called up by the Tiresias host. He there gives himself up to all the poetry of his ancient *souvenirs*, and to expansive demonstrations of friendship worthy of the times of Pylades and Orestes. The now forgotten triumphs of former times, and "love passages" long since stripped of their plumes, are called to mind. The conversation turns on pieces, parts, and illus-

trious personages, whose names no one ever heard: and in every possible tone of lamentation is paraphrased the melancholy exclamation of the poet,—"*O præteritos!*"

In the midst of this circle is one being to whom "the friend" in question is particularly annoying,—a *jeune première*, no less eternal in her youth than the spring of the classic Idalia, for whom our good man entertains a platonic and unrequited affection. He has grown old in this monotonous attachment; Cupid's arrow has become rusty in his bosom, and the wound has closed over it. This decayed old lover cannot find words enough to sufficiently bepraise her: he knows by heart every part she has ever acted: every "hit" the beloved object has made is engraved, together with the fatal date, in letters of fire upon his memory, and all the orations of past days are again brought forward by this tender and delighted historian, whenever he is called upon to celebrate a new triumph. He goes back to the times of *Œdipe*, and the *Vestale*, and *Philinte*, and the *Petit Chaperon Rouge*, and the *Visitandines*; and, alas! even of *Rose et Colas*, and the *Mariage de Figaro*. What a mortification, indeed, for this "sentimental young lady," who has just received a kiss upon her forehead from a mother, whose grandmother she might well be! Her very rouge grows pale upon her cheeks, and her false hair stands up in horror, in the midst of the roses mixed among it! As this fair goddess has never got older,—as she still persists in her primitive sentimental innocence, and perseveres in her shake and her *roulade*, her follower attaches his warmed-up *souvenirs* to this bunch of evergreens, and persuades himself that the evening twilight is the rosy-fingered Aurora. As to his own life and adventures, he makes no concealment of them.

Our "friend" has done nothing all his life—absolutely nothing. In 1782, he was an officer in the Queen's Regiment, and made acquainted with the Intendant of the Court amusements, who first invited him to supper with some of the "ladies" of the Opera. He has known Molé and Mademoiselle Clairon, and encouraged the débuts of the *petite D——*, "here present," as he adds, "as adorable as ever,"—(the *petite D——* makes a most diabolical face at this announcement,)—and from that moment he never quitted the green-room. He knows all the French "classic drama" by heart, and it was he who taught Talma his famous *Qu'en dis-tu?* He can still fancy he hears Lekain exclaiming, *Et sa tête à la main demande son salaire.* He was very young, to be sure; but he still shudders with poetic terror at the recollection of the sound of the tragedian's powerful voice, and the gesture with which he seemed to cut off his own head, and roll it under his fingers. He then turns to the *jeune première*, for whom he has condemned himself to adoration "for life," and tenderly reproaches this *enfant*, as he calls her—"ever beautiful, divine, supernatural, but inhuman"—for all the sighs she has stolen from his heart. A smile is all this constant affection receives. Once, it is true, he had some glimpses of hope. One day, after a little *souper champêtre*, he received some token of pity: they were to have met again—a rendezvous even was given; but, alas! a jealous destiny overthrew all,—the catastrophe of the 10th of August. The conclusion of this history is never known; for, at this critical point, the fair actress, calling up a convenient cold, coughs so loud, and gives a look so anything but tender, that her "friend"

leaves the rest of his truncated narrative in his pocket, from whence he draws a *bonbonnière*, quoting, from some ancient comedy, the words,—

"Wilt please you take a piece of liquorice?"*

The Actors' Friend never omits an opportunity of making a quotation,—quotations generally leading to anecdotes, and anecdotes to biographical details.

The friend of the ancient lyric and tragic drama has generally had several attachments, or rather friendships, founded on admiration. His furniture sufficiently attests the fact. Every piece of it is the legacy of some great actor, or a purchase made at the auction after his death. The walls of his room are hung with horrid little portraits, vilely engraved, and framed in that kind of black wood which the precepts of Rousseau have dedicated to friendship. Even when rich, this strange mortal lives economically; and his fortune is spent in magnificent presents, which he formerly used to make in imitation of Duke this or that, and which are now a matter of habit, from which he does not choose to derogate. Besides, these sort of attentions are repaid with tokens of affection dear to his heart; and then, "*We artists* always *are* prodigal."

When all his contemporaneous "glories" have disappeared, and he finds himself alone, he retires in his turn, and "leaves the stage." His capital has been injured; he has lived longer than he expected; and he is forced to retreat to some ricketty old chateau, the name of which he wears, but which he had never seen in his life. His habits are completely changed; his solitude freezes him; his regrets undermine him; and as, in his rage for quotation, "*il fut toujours vertueux*," and consequently, "*aime à voir lever l'aurore*," getting up so early fatigues him, and he dies off with the first autumn leaves.

Such is the ancient Friend of the Arts, always kind, affectionate, polite, modest, and well-educated. The type, however, is rare now-a-days. Actors care only for themselves: their self-sufficiency, which disdains their authors' and protects their own laurels, rejects also the humble ivy which would fain cling around them. The Actors' Friend of the day is either a newspaper critic or a moneyed man; and, in the former instance, he is called *canaille* as soon as his back is turned; and, in the latter, he is laughed at as a dupe. A few old poets, however, still exist, who have their old friends, to whom they read old poems upon old subjects, and whose *chefs-d'œuvre*, "to the world unknown," are applauded by old hands; and they all agree, both authors and admirers, in deploring the bad taste of the times, and excommunicating and exorcising the thankless and ungrateful youth of the age.

When an "Artists' Friend" has lived thirty years by his side, he considers himself more than a relation,—more than wife and children to him. From constantly following his idol, listening to him, and examining him, he has at length got to know every turn of his inmost soul. He never separates himself from his "second self," and considers that he has acquired over him the most sacred rights.

After the death of Mademoiselle Duchesnois, some one met an old gentleman whom he had known at her house. He was pale, and overwhelmed with despair. All consolation was tried in vain. "It is not so much her loss," he exclaimed

* "Vous plait-il un morceau de ce jus de réglisse?"

"which affects me, as her horrible ingratitude. Would you believe it, Sir?—She died without leaving me anything in her will,—me! me who, for the last thirty years, dined at her house three times a week!"

In spite of the fervour of so pious an attachment, Heaven protect all artists from the questions and the arguments of their fatal "Friend." The evil one could raise up no better instrument to lead them astray into the sins of anger and impatience.

This aberration of a whole life is, as we have said, the result of a puerile pride, an ill-regulated enthusiasm, and a powerless ambition, to all which indolence generally adds its share. Unfortunately, no talent is to be acquired by getting a sort of general smattering of scientific matters; and your twopenny knowledge leads only to mere twaddling talk, and a perversion of judgment—the worst and first of the qualities which constitute an "Artists' Friend."

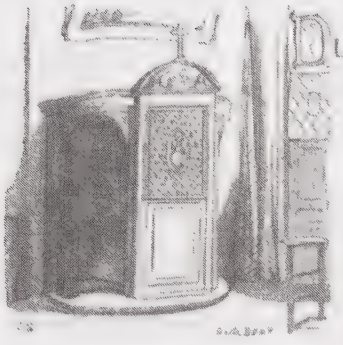






THE CATHOLIC PRIEST.

BY A. DELAFOREST.



DURING the long struggles of our first Revolution, no social position was more constantly assailed and severely broken down than the existence of the Catholic Clergy. The nobility have resumed their titles, recovered part of their landed estates, and received, by a legislative enactment, a magnificent compensation for their losses; the middle classes, in their various grades, have gained a marked influence; but the clergy—ridiculed and prostrated in the eighteenth century—proscribed and decimated by the Convention—hated and persecuted by the Directory and its deists—protected, afterwards, by the policy of the Empire—patronized but too openly after the Restoration—and, however despised, treated with apparent respect by the Juste Milieu—the clergy have never recovered from the attacks of Protestantism, philosophy, and religious indifference. The position, fortune, and dignity of the Catholic Priest seem to have sunk for ever.

In vain the "Assemblée Constituante" voted an annual grant of eighty millions of francs as a compensation for the spoliation of Church property: the brighter day that appeared to dawn for the Church brought back none of her lost splendours:—

the generation of those mitred princes, whose magnificent and enlightened patronage shed its beneficent influence equally over all the members of their order, has passed away; not a vestige survives of the diocesan conclaves, which, while they maintained the discipline and independence of the clergy, showed to the people the power of the national Church; the numerous preferments, which, in their extensive hierarchy, left open for every Priest many situations, oftener given to real merit than to court favour (whatever may have been said of them), are now no more; the landed estates that enabled their proprietors liberally to assist the poor, and also conferred on them the privilege of a seat in the council of the nation, are all swept away; the modest vicarages, the obscure but honourable houses of the humble curates and their aged and faithful housekeepers, have almost all disappeared; and, with the solitary exception of one asylum for the reception of twelve poor members of the Catholic clergy, established, under the royal patronage of a daughter of the illustrious house of Bourbon, by the greatest French writer of the present day,* there does not exist in all France, a shelter to which the poor Priest, left without resource after a life spent in the service of the Church, can retire to end his days in peace.

The general situation of the clergy, created by laws bearing the stamp of atheism, or at least of religious indifference, cannot but affect the Priest as an individual. His calling is not recognized by the temporal law until he obtains the title of vicar,† when he begins to receive an official salary out of the public purse. He is then considered a government officer; and as such his annual salary is voted with those of all other public servants, from the king down to the last messenger; and a sum of twenty-eight millions of francs being divided between the thirty thousand Levites that Government condescend to keep in pay for the service of the Church, each Priest's average income is under forty pounds a-year, and there is not one Priest for every thousand souls.

Thus a great number of Priests, not included in the official list, which begins by the archbishops, and ends with the vicars, must depend for their existence on their own personal property, or their scanty share of the small fees collected in the church they attend, which are divided by the vestry under the superintendence of the curate of the parish. The immediate consequence of this material condition of the French clergy is, that their numbers are recruited solely from the lower classes, and from those poor but respectable families in which the young men, accustomed from childhood to hardship and privation, are prepared with more fortitude to bear the difficulties with which the Priest has to contend in his laborious career, under our *philosophical* laws, and in the present state of public morals.

Thus, also, it must be acknowledged, those free and spontaneous vocations which sometimes appear in the highest stations of life, being now above any suspicion of ambition or cupidity, are the more strong and durable, and command the more authority and respect. The Catholic Church is disencumbered of those *abbés*, who had only the name and half the costume of the Priest; whose busts, fancifully sculptured, might be seen in the gardens of the nobility; who used to write

* M. de Chateaubriand.

† The Vicar, in the French Catholic Church, is the assistant to the Curate, whose situation corresponds to that of the Rector in the English Church.

tragedies when they could not write songs or operas: a kind of irregular troop, without leader and without pay, who, strangers as they were to the militant clergy, brought by their conduct inevitable disgrace on the cloth in the eyes of the vulgar and the ignorant. Delivered from these idle and perverted members, the Catholic Church as at present organized prepares the young Levites, whom she brings up with care in her bosom, to the solitary and cheerless life that awaits them in the exercise of their calling. No one now thinks of railing or blaspheming against the Priest: it is no longer the fashion, and is esteemed vulgar; but, prompted by strong feelings of antipathy, or dreading the restraint his presence imposes, or, perhaps, wincing under the tacit censure conveyed by his example, people shun the Priest, and exclude him almost entirely from their domestic circle. Either through systematic religious indifference, or on account of their irregular habits, or in obedience to worldly prejudice, they never think of living on terms of intimacy with a man for whose assistance they apply on every important circumstance of their life, and who will be called to afford them spiritual comfort on their deathbed. Truth to say, the Priest is far from desiring admission to the pleasures of the social family circle—he would not enjoy them. He avoids mixing with society, because he perceives, beneath an apparent kindness of manners, prejudices, want of sympathy, and adverse feelings prevailing against him; and he will not excite or set them at defiance. The Priest's religious education has taught him, with humble resignation, to bear solitude, scorn, and all worldly tribulations; and, prepared as he is to live apart from a world that cannot do without him, he is ever ready to tender his assistance when required. Such is the situation, above the reach of prejudice, assigned the Priest in the social scale by the Gospel and the moral code in all Christian countries.

Without taking into account poor children brought up by country curates, and a few choristers educated by the metropolitan parishes, who generally complete their course of clerical studies, and take orders, in the seminaries the youthful pupils attend upon themselves in their rooms, out of humility and for the sake of economy; they wait upon one another at table, where, as well as in their walks, their professors and superiors are constantly with them, and treated in like manner. The pupils take it in turns to say prayers, to preside over the dormitory and the school-room, to attend the infirmary, to superintend daily purchases, to run on errands, and to distribute among the poor the remains of every meal. The whole of the duties and operations connected with the management of the house being thus successively performed by every pupil, they all acquire early habits of order, of patient and regular command, and of easy and rational obedience. Abstinence, long meditation, pious exercises,—subdue the body to the will of the mind. There is no corporal punishment; everything is conducted by, and yields to, the authority of reason and rule. When a pupil cannot or will not submit to these, compulsion is never resorted to, and he may leave the house as quietly as he entered it. Both in town, and in the country residences belonging to almost every seminary, the pupil's pleasure and recreations, varying according to age and taste, are lively and joyous, without being quarrelsome and noisy: some, during their rapid walk, enjoy a literary or philosophical discussion; others play at ball, run races, or practise gymnastic exercises;

chess, backgammon, and billiards are reserved for those who are fond of more quiet games.

Prepared for every emergency and for all the cares of life, there is scarcely a private distress or social change or agitation in which the Priest has not a part to play, and, with the salutary influence of his example, he invariably brings resignation, dignity, and the propriety inseparable from his character.

Sometimes, on leaving the seminary, he is appointed tutor to the scion of a rich family, which continues or affects aristocratical tradition. At once grave and kind to his pupil, the Priest soon wins the respect of this constant and sharp-sighted observer of his actions; and this respect, ere long, ripens into confidence and friendship, which the pupil, become a man and a father, seldom fails to transmit to his sons. Placed, by the character of his duties, in the double and difficult situation of an almost menial subordinate towards the head of the family, and the superior of the servants—at once master and servant—the Priest is never servile nor overbearing, never haughty nor familiar. He is sparing of flattering praise, and abstains as much as possible from the exercise of his authority; he is neither too humble nor too exacting; and after the turn through Italy, Switzerland, or Germany, his pupil's education being completed, whether the young Priest receive a pension or not, he almost invariably retains the friendship of his pupil, and the confidence of the family.

The newly-ordained Priest who has no taste for tuition, or who is afraid alike of its advantages and its difficulties, is always anxious to perform his sacerdotal duties; and, after the Christmas consecration, his bishop appoints him resident Priest of some large parish in a great town. Let us follow him there, the better to appreciate the privations and the toils of the French Catholic Priest. His only income is composed of the tenth or twelfth part of the voluntary fees paid to the parish for the christening and commemorative masses, (marriage and burial-service fees belonging exclusively to curates and vicars,) and this precarious and scanty resource hardly enables him to provide the bare necessaries of life. He is obliged to take a lodging at the top of some decent but obscure house; a pallet bed, a table, and a chair or two, compose the whole of his furniture; and if he has any attendance at all, he is indebted for it to the private feelings of some honest charwoman, who finds a compensation in the enjoyment of her charitable feelings for her insufficient wages.

This is not all. He will also visit the sick, the poor, the prisoners; and however difficult he might find it to surmount the natural dislike inherent to humanity for scenes of wretchedness and misery, his sense of duty, of evangelical benevolence and heavenly reward, will not desert him in his arduous task. But who will not sympathize with the painful depression of a cultivated mind, obliged constantly to commune with children, women, men of the lower condition, whose intellect is hardly open to any light, who know not how to discern the acts of their every-day life, who are ignorant of the value of the words they utter—half savage beings, who do not even present, as a compensation for their stupidity, the stimulant attraction of a conversion to make, of a new civilisation to prepare? Who will not pity the mental torture to be endured by those constantly re-told instructions, by that

attendance to confraternities of religious old maids, by those unintelligible confessions, which form an essential part of the young Priest's duty, at the beginning of his professional career? Such intellectual miseries are however supported by the Catholic Priest with patience and energy—almost with joy. But the heroic missionary, who braves all sorts of dangers for the triumph of his faith, is he not in a much more enviable situation?

At the Church Catechism, the young Priest is obliged to blend, in his religious instructions, clearness—so difficult in such delicate matters, and before an infant audience—with variety, and even cheerfulness. He must, in order to engage his pupils' attention, intersperse with his lectures little stories, anecdotes, and even jokes. The latter, we must confess, are not always very pleasant, nor are they very well told; but still they answer the Priest's purpose, as may be judged by the punctual attendance of the children to the catechism, by the progress of their instruction, and by their constant liveliness.

It is not enough for the Priest to be well-informed, and to be skilled in the art of speaking; he must be also a proficient singer, and teach his young penitents to sing religious hymns. The pastor and his flock are not generally aware of the profane origin of the music adapted to these pious songs; but, although it may provoke the sarcastic smiles of more knowing listeners, it is purified by the good intentions of the young choristers and the pious *impresario*.

We shall not attempt to follow the Priest in the routine of all his professional duties, performing successively the christening, marriage, and burial services, our especial province being to observe and describe him out of church, in his connexion with the world and society. After many years of trial, his merit, not unassisted by his family interest, or the patronage of some protectors, may obtain for him the appointment of vicar or curate; nay, perhaps he may be raised to the state of a vicar-general or a canon. Become bishop or archbishop—and, as nothing is impossible, some future day may see him cardinal and pope—the Priest can always, we shall not say hope, but fear (which is more consistent with his humility) to be entrusted with the spiritual government of the Christian world. Brought up for all situations of life, he is prepared for all changes of fortune, and will bear them all with equal dignity: his habitual chastity, poverty, and resignation, give him a complete control over himself. Indifferent, but not selfish—charitable, without parading any outward emotion—observant, without malignity—silent, without being disdainful—and cautious, although he does not lack courage—he will appear irreproachable to the world; and he will rather abstain from mixing with society than engage himself too warmly in its conflicts. You will never hear of the Priest except when you want him; and be he poor or rich, in the lowest ranks of the church militia or among its highest dignitaries, he will be in close contact with every social crisis, without playing any conspicuous or offensive part. Has any one connected with the courts of law ever heard of a Priest appearing there as a debtor or creditor, plaintiff or defendant? We know only of two recent exceptions, and, unwilling as we are to recal painful recollections, we must say, that one of the men alluded to was not French, and that both had been attainted by the discipline of Church before being found guilty by a criminal court. Still these two solitary

examples, in our days, when all ears and all eyes are anxiously open to the smallest delinquencies of the Levites of the church, bear the most striking testimony to the high character of the French clergy, to which no other can be compared. One or two bad sheep in a flock of thirty thousand are hardly worth mentioning; and the united clergy of Italy, Germany, Portugal, England, Spain, and both Americas, cannot boast, like the French clergy, of the mighty assemblage of so many virtues, united to such exemplary dignity, poverty, and learning.

Buried now in a few legislative, municipal, and academic mummies, the spirit of Voltaire will no more invent and publish pretended misdeeds perpetrated by Catholic Priests. Calumny has made way for truth, and the newspapers are every day filled with descriptions of acts of courage, devotedness, and benevolence, accomplished by members of the Catholic clergy, whose example is in keeping with their best sermons. Here the archbishop of the metropolis, when a contagious fever is raging in Paris, can be constantly seen in attendance at the hospitals, adopting all orphans that the fatal disease throws upon his inexhaustible charity; there a young vicar plunges into the river, at the peril of his life, to rescue the insane or imprudent victim, whom he saves from certain death; another, braving the danger of a fatal conflagration, preserves the peasant's cottage, or the manufactory that gives employment to many operatives. Again, it is a Priest who throws himself between two combatants misled by a false sense of honour, and a sincere reconciliation takes place upon the spot selected for deadly contest. Every day, in fine, is revealed to the public some noble or generous deed accomplished by members of that class so long devoted to the calumnies of the press.

Let us again observe the Priest in his various avocations.

The chaplain to *the Royal Colleges* cannot but see with painful feelings the indifference or aversion of the heads of those establishments to religious instruction; but, nevertheless, he is not deterred from pursuing his beneficent task, and gives to the pupils the incessant benefit of his precepts, together with his example.

The chaplain to *the Prisons* has to encounter less resistance from the keepers of the jail, than the former from the masters of the school; and he never fails to give to the prisoners material assistance and spiritual comfort, more welcome and more profitable than it is generally thought in the world.

It is our misfortune not to be able to say anything of the Priest on board of men-of-war, and in the army; for, since 1830, it has been legally decided, that the soldiers and the sailors of the nation, be they ill, wounded, or at the point of death, need not the consolations and comfort which the military chaplains, after having shared their dangers, used to afford them in the field of battle or in the hospital.

But there is another trial that the Priest is not denied. In his visits to the convicts, in his pious attendance at the scaffold, where he accompanies the criminal who will in a few minutes suffer the pain of death, what resignation, what courage, what strength of mind are required to comfort, with looks and words of hope and peace, those miserable beings who have almost irretrievably lost all hope of pardon from their offended Maker! Is there one among us, even moved by the most Christian feelings, and endowed, at the same time, with the power of resisting

the strongest agitation, who could bear—nay, who would undertake by choice, that terrible duty which the Priest accomplishes with such majesty, even when, his nature betraying the torture of his mind, drops of cold sweat appear on his forehead.

And is this all? No: there is something worse, and better. It is the missionary —not, be it understood, the missionary of the foreign and Protestant societies, who goes, not entirely regardless of his fortune, accompanied by his wife and children, driven in a comfortable carriage, or on board a first-rate ship, to sell with profit, or give away without discrimination, German or English bibles to people who know not, and will never know, a word of English or German:—we mean the Catholic missionary (of whom we intend some day to give a complete description), who accepts with joy every sacrifice, because he believes in the Word of his God; and when he spreads it among those he is preparing for the happiness of Christianity, he knows he is advancing at the same time the progress of science, commerce, and of the arts, and thus promoting the glory of his country.

And, with so many duties, with such abnegations and such poverty, some there are who would fain impose also on the Priest the duties of marriage! Let us admit the truth of the sophistical doctrine of certain philosophers, and suppose the Priest married: how, then, will he be able to assist those unfortunate women who, in their griefs or their faults, can only have recourse to him? If he have children, he will not devote himself to those of the poor; if he have the wants, the emotions, inevitably brought by family and paternity, it will be impossible for him to be charitable, gentle, patient, discreet, in the midst either of his joys or his domestic sorrows; or perhaps he and his will be open to the censure of the world, and the same assistance will not be claimed at his hands; people will first lose their faith in him, and then desert him; who can tell?—perhaps they will despise him. After all, the Catholic Priest does not complain of the prohibition of marriage; he knows its duties and its dangers, and is afraid even of its advantages and enjoyments. It is not only to follow the example of Christ—it is not only because the true meaning of the holy Scripture commands him celibacy, and because the discipline of the Church forbids marriage, that the Priest is adverse to it; but he feels also how much the purity of his mind, the chastity of his senses, the liberty of his person, and the absence of all individual wants, are indispensable to the majesty of his calling, the dignity of his character, and the accomplishment of his multifarious duties. The obligations of the husband and those of the Priest would interfere with each other, to the detriment of both.

There is in this rapid sketch neither exaggeration nor poetry. Plain truth is told, supported by undeniable facts. We have shown the French Priest in his real character, without the servile and injudicious veneration of narrow-minded devotees; but we have also tried to vindicate him from the suspicion of hypocrisy entertained against him by all libertines. We have portrayed the Priest, not as he is misrepresented by silly people and slanderers, but as he is now—more the man of the times, more attentive to its wants, its signs, and its progress, than he ever was before, because experience and the calamities of the Church have not been lost upon him.

Are we to hope or to fear again to see the Priest—now, as at other times—meddle with political questions, and play a part in the contest and the government of kings and nations? Will the Priest ever be the director of public affairs, and bring to the council of the nation the authority of his character, his prudence, his experience? Is it his duty? Will it be in his power to do it? This is a great question, of more importance than is generally thought by the vulgar. If we were to take only into consideration the high merit of some Priests of the present day, the talent of first order displayed in their writings, their eminent virtues, we should consider them as fully qualified to conduct the government of the state; but we must confess that the majority of the clergy, in their opinions publicly delivered, seem adverse to it no less than the majority of the public.

However this may be, to sum up the social and distinctive features of the physiognomy of the French Priest, follow him from the seminary to the college chapel, to the barrack, on board ship, to the font and to the altar, to the deathbed of the sick, to the cottage of the poor, and the wigwam of the savage; observe him treading on the carpeted floors of splendid mansions, or visiting the convict in his cell, and accompanying him to the scaffold: you will always find him adapting his demeanour and his speech to times, to places, and to persons. The most characteristic trait of the French Catholic Priest—that which bears the impress of his peculiar education—is his disposition always to act with the most becoming propriety, his constant readiness to make sacrifices to every situation. It has been said with truth, that there is always some virtue concealed beneath the rigid observance of propriety; and the Priest being the most perfect model of all sorts of propriety, he resumes in his life the practice, or at least the appearance, of every virtue.



THE FRUITERER.



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BY FRANCOIS COQUILLE.



QUITE dazzling to the eye are the brilliant shops of Paris, with their rich gildings, their rare marbles, and splendid mirrors. They are, in truth, no longer shops, but grand saloons of art, before which the humble customer stands gaping with wonder, and, not daring to enter, retires with his money still in his pocket. When wearied with this glitter, one stops with pleasure before the modest display of the Fruiterer: nothing is more agreeable, and refreshes more sensibly both the eye and the thoughts.

Notwithstanding the apparent confusion of the humble shop, a kind of order has presided over the arrangement of the fruit and vegetables, whether hanging in bunches, tied up in bundles, heaped in pyramids, or lying scattered around. Bright-coloured carrots, onions, and long green and white leeks, frame the doorway like a rich garland; a little lower may be seen, according to the season, turnips, asparagus, *aubergines*, or large summer cabbages, which contrast with their more aristocratic brethren, the elegant cauliflowers; behind this rampart appear peas, beans, strawberries, currants, and cherries; while outside the door is deposited, upon a ricketty stool, a large basket of mushrooms.

Were these productions of our own climate exotic, they would be no doubt much admired; and yet the tropical countries, so proud of their bananas, their dates, and their pineapples, cannot boast any fruits more delicious than our peaches and apricots, more fragrant than our wild strawberries, more refreshing or livelier-coloured than our currants and cherries.

All these treasures are placed under the eye and hand of the passenger, within reach of the thieves, of whom the Fruiterer does not even seem to think. Her confiding nature contrasts advantageously with the precautions of other shopkeepers: these have secret drawers, and strong boxes; they hide themselves and their goods behind iron railings and trellis-work; but the Fruiterer would put, without hesitation, her choicest fruits in the street. All places seem fit for the exhibition of her goods: her ever-open window, the step of her door, and even the chairs she arranges skilfully outside, are laden with fruits. She may be seen passing and repassing, and threading her way easily through a labyrinth of vegetables. However mixed they may appear, she knows where to lay her hand upon those wanted, and her feet never tread upon them. After all, except for her eggs, she fears no *breakage*.

The Fruiterer is one of the Parisian types, but she is not to be found in the fashionable parts of the town. In the Chaussée d'Antin, around the Bourse, and the Place Vendôme, there are Fruiterers who style themselves *Verduriers;* but there is not *the* Fruiterer. She flourishes in the Faubourgs Montmartre, Poissonnière, St. Denis, and St. Martin; she loves the Marais and the suburbs; there she thrives, and shines in all her natural vigour,—the damp and narrow streets are to her what a good soil is to her vegetables.

The Fruiterer is generally above the middle age, plump, with an honest face, which prepossesses you at once. Her colour is not very high, like the fish-women and other occupiers of market-stalls. She has not the bold look, the masculine voice, or the gestures, which *distinguish* these *ladies*. There is about her something simple and rustic, sensible withal, active, and intelligent. She is careful neither of her person nor her language, and depends for her appearance upon no trickery of art.

If her gown does not fit very neatly to her figure, it is perhaps that, having no longer any waist, she does not know exactly where to tighten it. She goes about, her sleeves tucked up to her elbows, showing arms of rather a dark red, and covered with a large apron, not entitled to much praise for its excessive whiteness. She is so fond of her every-day costume, that she keeps it even on Sundays: she changes her cap though, the coquette!

Such a woman, when married, is never ruled by her husband. The law, which has ordered obedience on her part, has made in that respect a mistake, as well as in many other things. The husband of the Fruiterer is a problematical being, who without doubt exists, but who is not seen, not known, and never even spoken of. He might be considered buried alive, so much is he hidden and eclipsed by his wife's ample rotundity and importance. It is said that he moves, breathes, and speaks like other men; it is also asserted that, very early in the morning, he may be seen at the markets buying and carrying home to his wife the various articles for her trade,—that he helps her to wash the vegetables, and shell the peas. We think all

this very probable; but, so far from giving his name to his wife, he loses even his own. He is called neither Pierre, nor Simon, nor Jacques. It is his wife who gives him the name of her trade.—*The Fruiterer!* So is she called everywhere; and if by chance he is mentioned, he is known only by the name of *the husband of the Fruiterer!*

Such is the power of habit, that if a man should establish himself as a Fruiterer, he would immediately pass over to the feminine gender.

The Fruiterer comes in the social scale just after the grocer, in that class midway between the rich and the poor. She has all the good qualities of the grocer, without perhaps any of his faults. The pretension of the grocer is well known. Notwithstanding his frank and mild countenance, his grade of serjeant in the National Guard, and his obsequious bows, he aims at wit and fine words. There is about him a colonial and aristocratical perfume; he is proud of his corner-house commanding two streets, proud of the great families who honour him with their custom, and proud of the mahogany counter behind which sits enthroned his "spouse." The Fruiterer has none of this pride: her counter is a deal table; her throne is a rush-bottomed chair; her customers, tradesmen and poor people; she keeps no books, and has never been known to have a cash-box.

The most humble may enter familiarly her shop; her charges are rather high, and she often abates her price, but what of that? She writes not upon her sign the cabalistic words *prix fixe*, and therefore people have the right (now-a-days so rare) of cheapening her goods. Where is the pleasure of buying, if one cannot bargain a little? To take her at her first word would almost offend her. There is, respecting her, one fact worthy to be noticed. Butchers and bakers—those kings of shopkeepers—are often condemned for selling false weight; the grocer himself, the type of honesty, has sometimes been found guilty on this score; but the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, which exposes to the public all delinquents, has yet to inscribe on its columns the name of the Fruiterer,—she is conspicuous there by her absence.

Let us consider a little how far extend her connexions, and what moral and commercial influence she exercises in her neighbourhood. She holds to everything, and everything holds to her. Around her shop, as a centre, other trades establish and range themselves; and while the grocer and the wine-merchant take possession of the corners of the street, the Fruiterer reigns peacefully in the middle. The rich, who send their purveyors to the markets, need her not; but the working classes and the poor require her near at hand. Without her, the neighbourhood would not be habitable. Where could be obtained all those thousand little necessaries of life, and the every-day news, which to some is also a necessary? How would the grisette, the student, or the artizan of all classes and callings, provide their breakfast without a bit of cream-cheese, or the fruit or walnuts which she measures or counts to them with a hand truly liberal? Could the small ménage do without the carrots, cabbages, leeks, and onions, which improve so wonderfully the taste of the meat, colour the soup, and give it a flavour? The native of Paris, who has seen nothing beyond the town, who knows not how the corn grows, and is ignorant of the time for the harvest or the vintage, follows the course of the seasons by looking in at the Fruiterer's. She is there to remind him of what he would perhaps forget:

that, far from the muddy streets, there are rich and smiling hills and verdant meadows. The love of nature is awakened in his heart; and some fine Sunday he determines to pass the barriers,—those Herculean pillars on which Parisian cockneys imagine they see written, "Thou shalt go no farther,"—and ramble in the woods of Belleville, or the Prés St. Gervais. If, on the dusty roads, he congratulates himself on the pure air he is breathing; if, tempted by no matter what *forbidden fruit*, he misses his way, is found trespassing, and falls into the hands of the keeper, who has followed him step by step,—all these pleasures, this enchanting walk, these emotions so new and so varied, and particularly the sight of the green fields, to whom does he owe it all, but to the Fruiterer?

Every month brings its produce: sorrel, lettuces, celery, and endive, are by turns displayed in her shop. Then come the cauliflowers and the peas, those first indications of summer; then the strawberries, and the whole family of refreshing fruits. Now the time has come for new potatoes, all small and round, or slightly elongated: the potato alone is the Fruiterer's glory. Honour to the shop that supplies the poor with this natural bread! But autumn arrives, laden with its brilliant tributes; and though the winter produces nothing, it is decked a long time with the riches of autumn. When the country and the gardens are covered with snow, the shop of the Fruiterer—that artificial garden—is as well supplied as ever.

The Fruiterer sells many things besides: she is renowned for her butter, cheese, and fresh eggs; and shares with the grocer the honour of cultivating gherkins, the vegetable of proverbial celebrity. She keeps a variety of brushes, and mysterious brooms, whose uses are unexplainable. There are also pots of all forms and all colours,—vases more useful than elegant, but which are in very general requisition. Here, also, the good La Fontaine might find,—

"De quoi faire à Margot pour sa fête un bouquet."

Even the little birds are not forgotten: beside the chickweed (what would become of Paris without chickweed?) there are suspended outside long ears of millet and little round cakes, with the deceitful appearance of *échaudés*.

Lastly, you will find at the Fruiterer's those little money-boxes, just open to receive the daily savings of the poor, but which must be broken to restore their deposits. Who does not know them? The money-box, so dear to the grisette, the shop girl, the school-boy, and the industrious workman! The money-box, the savings' bank of innocent pleasures. The Fruiterer, that worthy purveyor of such a precious article, sells it for—a halfpenny.

Flowers and fruit, cheese, butter, and fresh eggs, money-boxes also and chickweed, no doubt can be bought at the markets; but the markets are so far off, and time in Paris is so valuable. The shop of the Fruiterer is a little market established in every street; each house sends there for its daily provision; and even the grand mansions, when the markets are badly supplied, are obliged to have recourse to the humble shop, and are surprised to be so well served.

You can now conjecture, and fully appreciate, the moral importance of the Fruiterer. None enters her doors without exchanging a few words; her shop is the

favourite resort of servants, and through them all family secrets are revealed to her. Placed at the foot of those lofty houses, which contain each a little colony, she sees and she knows everything. Love affairs of young girls, quarrels, scandal of all sorts, —nothing escapes her; and her customers, who succeed each other without ceasing, and who bring her the tribute of their pence and their gossip, keep her constantly informed of all that is passing, not only in her own neighbourhood, but in the distant parts of the town. She is the standing confidant of all the nursery-maids. The portress does not enjoy half the respect and consideration shown to the Fruiterer. The portress is spiteful, peevish, and notoriously indiscreet. The Fruiterer is renowned for her discretion and the soundness of her advice; and, besides, she is an *established* woman. She listens and talks both at a time; often she interrupts herself to arrange some cabbages pushed out of place by an awkward foot, or a large artichoke which has just been separated from its companions. She has always a story begun, one of those interesting tales like the Arabian Nights. Her customers go in and go out; her audience changes; but the story continues: she loses herself in long digressions, and intersperses a thousand incidental anecdotes; but, after the manner of my grandmother's famous knife, it is always the same story.

The Fruiterer carries her heart in her hand; her friendship is sincere, and her obliging disposition well known. She is ever ready to serve others, and never refuses any assistance in her power. Although her trade, less than any other, can support long credit, she will not refuse to her poor neighbours a few farthings, and even a few pence, and to her pence and farthings are shillings. To the indigent workman, to the widow or the orphan, the worthy woman will give what is called *good measure:* alms nobly and delicately tendered, and for which she does not receive even thanks, for the persons she obliges in such a manner are not conscious of it.

The school-boys, or the urchins in the street, who stop to gaze at and admire the unapproachable opulence of the grocer, contemplate with a more earnest and natural longing the good things of the Fruiterer; often they determine upon little thefts at her expense: the design almost always succeeds, and then they scamper away in great haste to swallow all evidence of their delinquency. The grocer would despatch his boy at their heels; he would even, in spite of his dignity, run after them himself, and, with a formidable air, conduct them to the station-house. The Fruiterer, informed too late, runs out like a spider from her inner shop, and appears with her hands on her hips, and her cap slightly on one side; she shouts Stop thief! and Police! and pursues the marauders with her shrill voice. If an officious neighbour succeeds in catching them, and brings them before her, she loads them with imprecations, predicts the gallows, and often ends by sending them home with a good lecture and a handful of cherries.

Who will understand the joys, as well as the cares, of this peaceful existence, where each day resembles the other, and where the greatest social convulsions pass unheeded? Napoleon used to say, that there was perhaps in Paris some being so isolated as never to have heard of his name. Well! the Fruiterer, who knows so much of every-day life, knows very little of political events—unlike her neighbour,

the portress, who pretends generally to the knowledge of a statesman. Sometimes, in her leisure hours, the Fruiterer borrows of her neighbour the half of an old newspaper; she reads rarely, and never learnt to read well, so she spells it with great trouble, and skips half of the words: she does not understand it much, but that is no doubt the fault of the newspaper; and, besides, the end of the phrase or column will explain what seemed to her obscure or incoherent. The paragraph or the page finished, she has retained merely a few strange sentences and names she has heard pronounced before, but of whose real history she is ignorant. Tired and discouraged, she gives up the task, too fatiguing to her eyes and her intelligence, and returns to her old prayer-book—a book that she knows by heart, which does not prove that she understands it. But what matter? the heart supplies the deficiency of the head.

The Fruiterer rarely leaves her home; so many persons choose her shop for a rendezvous, that she is never without company. On Sundays, when a bright sun has dried the pavement, she sits before her door and holds a drawing-room in the street, in the shade of the high houses, and by the refreshing coolness of the street fountains. While gossiping with her neighbours, she casts from time to time a contented glance at her stores. Others run to the *barrière*, and ruin themselves in dances and pleasures of all sorts: her amusements are all of a more tranquil nature. To discover a fine lot of vegetables; to be able to show riper plums, larger eggs, fresher cabbages; to hang out at her door, like a sign-board, an enormous mushroom, which will be pointed at and spoken of as the wonder of the neighbourhood: this is her pride, her joy, her triumph; this is what she loves to see and hear.

It is sad to think that even the finest characters should have their spots and blemishes! The Fruiterer is jealous: her heart is vulnerable like Cæsar's, and she will not be second in the street. The early fruits that a rival succeeds in procuring before her, disturb her sleeep; the itinerant greengrocer, or the fruit-stall keeper under the gateways and at the street corners, who, having neither rent nor license to pay, can afford to sell cheaper, cause her anxiety and mortal displeasure. She inveighs against the police, and criminates even *Mósieu*, the prefect, himself; and, in the excess of her passion, she exclaims, "If I were government ——!"

She is accused of having implicit faith in dreams, and, with a view to their interpretation, she taxes her memory each morning to ascertain whether she has dreamt of dog, cat, or fish. We, who pretend to be strong-minded, must not be too severe upon this little weakness. It is an innocent recreation, and endless source of emotions which harm no one. Happy he, who, in the midst of the stern realities of life, can be affected by a dream! There is in this feeling more good-nature, more simplicity, and even more poetry, perhaps, than in a whole poem. Well! though she has been deceived so often, she still believes. Do not speak to her, ask no questions, be careful not to laugh at her, and seek not to draw her from the sorrowful humour in which she appears to indulge. This day will prove unlucky. Her fruit will spoil, she will take some counterfeit coin, or she will find stones fraudulently hidden in her jar of butter. What, indeed, might she not expect? She has dreamt a frightful dream, she has seen something fearful, and the remembrance of it haunts her; something which always forbodes misfortune, and which

she cannot twist into anything at all satisfactory. She has seen a cat—a black tom-cat!

The nature of some of her articles will not admit of her keeping a cat, the declared friend, or rather, perhaps, enemy, of cheese, for such excessive love almost resembles hate. The parrot is a luxury; but she keeps a jay, or a magpie; the parrots of the poor, which, with their chattering propensity, become to her formidable rivals. But, more generally, she suspends at her door a cage containing a goldfinch or a canary. The little songster, well supplied with chickweed and millet, and surrounded by vegetation, thinks himself in the midst of a garden, and under this agreeable illusion gaily sings all day long.

On certain important occasions, the Fruiterer consents to tear herself from the narrow sphere, which is to her the universe, to visit the Tuileries, the museums, and, better still, the Jardin des Plantes. But to draw her from her retreat, it must be nothing less than the arrival in Paris of a country cousin, to whom she must do the honours of the capital. See then dresses herself in her best; her husband, hitherto a nonentity, makes his appearance as real flesh and blood, and very much resembling other men. He carries a large red umbrella under one arm, and gives the other to his wife. The patriarchal couple advance slowly in the midst of the wonders that start up every day; they enjoy the astonishment of the provincials, who seem petrified by the sight of so many fine things; and are surprised themselves at the various new buildings and many improvements since their last excursion. They scarcely recognize certain parts of the town, are soon lost in the new streets, and are obliged to ask their way. For a Parisian, what a humiliation! The exhibition of pictures, which they endeavour to comprehend, and which they explain after their own fashion, causes them more fatigue than pleasure, and they are really happy only at the Jardin des Plantes: they are wild with admiration of the bears; they can only leave them to visit the elephant, and the giraffe, which they persist in miscalling the *girafle*; they shudder with fear at the roaring of the lions and tigers, and make many wise reflections on the ferocity of the hyena, and the mischievous disposition of the monkey.

Thus passes the life of the Fruiterer. Little by little, age bows her body and stiffens her limbs. She is still lively and good-tempered, but her movements have lost their vivacity. Who will succeed her? She has a daughter, of whom she is very proud, and whom she asserts to be her living portrait. Contented and matter-of-fact as far as she alone is concerned, from the force of her maternal love she becomes romantic, and dreams for her child a higher destiny, a life without trouble or labour, and finally a rich marriage. The white hands, the taper fingers, of her Angelina, were not made to handle dirty vegetables,—therefore the young lady has been taught to read, write, and embroider. She shall be dress-maker, milliner, or even *artiste*; certainly not Fruiterer, which, perhaps, might be better.

One morning the shop opens later than usual, and, to the astonishment of all, a man with scared looks is seen wandering to and fro in the midst of the vegetables, treading on some, knocking down others, and unable to find those asked for. The husband has taken the place of the Fruiterer, for his wife is laid up ill; but suffers less from the malady than from the annoyance and vexation of being confined to her

bed. The whole neighbourhood are concerned at the news; the street is not strewn with straw to deaden the sounds,—useless struggle of the rich to allay pain,—vain precaution, that the horses' feet and carriage-wheels carry away; but the neighbours, the friends of the good woman, all the gossiping sisterhood of the street, press in crowds to her door. They overwhelm with their questions, and bewilder with their advice the unfortunate husband, who does not know which to listen to. All recommend a different remedy, some wonderful recipe, whose sovereign virtue cannot fail to cure her: their tumultuous consultation makes a noise, a confusion, a strange medley of sounds, which goes on increasing until, being unable to hear themselves, they suddenly drop their voices, only to begin again a few minutes after.

The day that the Fruiterer is able to reappear in her shop is a day together of fatigue and happiness. She must relate herself, in all its details, although her husband has told it a hundred times, the whole history of her malady. Her audience standing around, basket in hand, listen eagerly, and make learned commentaries upon the most trivial circumstance. The Faculty itself would, without doubt, be astonished. They then learn who is the happy neighbour whose remedy has been successfully applied. It is now a curious spectacle to join the circle, to look at the extraordinary mortal, contemplate her face, and study her features, while she so obligingly allows herself to be admired. Every eye is fixed upon her; she is envied her success. Her reputation is made; she will be long spoken of in the neighbourhood, and consulted from all the adjacent streets. She will henceforth never want customers; she is already enjoying her celebrity; she is triumphant, and is happy. It is she who has cured the Fruiterer.

Warned by this illness of her failing strength, the Fruiterer determines to dispose of her business, and quit the neighbourhood she has animated so long. Another succeeds to her popularity and importance. It is a great event in the street; but, alas! everything is soon lost in oblivion. Little by little, the former Fruiterer is forgotten, according to the way of this inconstant world, which never remembers that which it sees not. She has retired to the suburbs of Paris, and has a little plot of ground, which she sows and waters; she now cultivates, but no longer sells, those much-loved flowers and fruits she sold for so many years when they were cultivated by other hands. She remains faithful to her early tastes and habits, and is to the end, at least with respect to the cabbage, like Boileau's rabbits,

> Qui, dès leur tendre enfance élevés dans Paris,
> Sentaient encor le chou dont ils furent nourris.



THE "VIVEUR."



THE "VIVEUR."

BY EUGENE BRIFFAULT.

On ne saurait trop embellir
Le court espace de la vie.



"LIFE is like movement," said one day my jovial friend Nollis, the most agreeable companion I ever knew, and who, in the gayest and wittiest society, is noted for his gaiety and his wit. "To teach or to explain life is impossible; it is only by living that one learns how to live. Come, let us spend the day together; so long as it lasts, I will hold myself responsible for your happiness. I hope to give you more practical instruction in the art of living—I do not say experience, for the word is associated with old age in a way that I do not like—than you would acquire in twenty years spent in profound study and meditation. All the manuals of epicurism, the most famous examples, from Sardanapalus to Louis XV., from Lucullus to M. de Cussy, from Alcibiades to the Duke of Lauzun, are not worth twenty-four hours of Parisian life. Come with me."

Such was the enthusiasm with which my friend pronounced this invitation, that I felt unable to resist: I obeyed, and yielded as if under the influence of a spell. Never before had I encountered such a mighty temptation. Already I could not help feeling enjoyment in my submission. My friend overpowered me; I listened to his speech as if he had been a supernatural being. He continued, regardless of my emotion, "It is now twelve o'clock; let us call on Adolphe; we shall be in the

very nick of time. The best hour to observe nature is at sunrise. I am about to introduce you to the real Viveur: be composed."

Adolphe's residence is in the Faubourg Montmartre. He has, in the Rue Bergère, modest apartments between the ground and first floors, looking on the court-yard. When we entered, we were asked no questions by the porter, who smiled and nodded to Nollis. A dozen steps up the staircase brought us to a little door, without a bell, and which my friend almost broke open with three tremendous blows. We overheard a lengthened yawn inside, followed by an energetic imprecation, and, a moment or two afterwards, we heard the heavy tread of naked feet on the floor, as if some one was jumping out of bed. The door was opened, and we caught a glimpse of an undressed gentleman, hastening to regain the bed he had just quitted.

"Go to the devil, Nollis!" growled the awakened sleeper to my friend, who had proceeded comfortably to plant himself in an arm-chair.

"Kept it up late last night, eh?" returned Nollis, lighting a cigar that laid on the table.

"Yes. Achille gave us a splendid supper, and it went off in the best style."

"Where did you meet, pray, and who was there?

"At the Café Anglais! All of us were there,—the old set, you know. A young gentleman from the country was introduced, who pretended to understand drinking champagne. Poor lad, he had not even conquered the rudiments."

"What females were of the party?

"Why, we had none. Ernest would have brought his two opera-dancers, but we did not allow it. Gallantry is a great nuisance, even with ladies of that sort. Women do not understand supper: when they affect reserve, they impose a general restraint; when they are free, they go to the other extreme. It was a great mistake, under the Regency, to admit ladies to the supper-table: in this respect, our fathers were decidedly wrong."

"How late did you keep it up?"

"Till four o'clock this morning. The waiters were nearly fast asleep. But, my dear Nollis, I cannot perceive but with regret, that suppers are going out of fashion. I need not tell you what we have done to keep them in vogue, to surpass even their ancient éclat, and confer on them new lustre: all in vain. Supper, my dear fellow, the repast of epicures, is losing ground every day. It is no longer appreciated. In carnival time, it degenerates into a coarse feast of debauchery; at other times it is forgotten, or not held in sufficient estimation. Dinner has superseded supper."

"But supper shall revive again," cried Nollis with enthusiasm. "Is not the dinner hour gradually growing later in the evening? Ere long, we shall not dine before the morrow. The time cannot be far distant when commercial and political discussions, literary squabbles, and all serious trifles, will be banished from the dining-room. Supper will then flourish again. But our present object is to breakfast; what's your idea?"

"I'll tell you by and by. But I must first get up."

While Adolphe was dressing, I carefully scrutinized the apartment and its owner. The furniture was not rich, but it had evidently been selected with great taste.

It unfortunately bore the appearance of extreme neglect, and it was easy to perceive that Adolphe did not pride himself on its careful preservation. A few books were lying about the room, among which I remarked Gil Blas, several of Crebillon's novels, a copy of Horace, and some odd volumes of Voltaire. Two little groups of statuary, trophies of the carnival, representing a galopade and some other dance in vogue at the "Chaumière,"—scenes of the Bal Chicart drawn by Gavarni,—a case of cigars, a knife-box, a lump or two of sugar, the standing part of a bottle of brandy, an unopened bottle of eau-de-Cologne, and six or seven louis, were scattered here and there in confusion, from the dressing-table to the sofa. The adjoining room, which was used as an antechamber, was still more modestly furnished: no ornament was visible except a broken pane in the window, a pair of recently polished boots, and one solitary chair, upon which the porter had deposited Adolphe's carefully brushed clothes.

Adolphe is about the middle height, and stout in proportion; he has a remarkably round face, blue eyes, and a very good complexion, notwithstanding the general expression of fatigue that pervades his features. His lips are rosy, his teeth white and regular, his hair is fair, and his countenance extremely pleasant; he is about thirty-four years of age, shows a precocious disposition to corpulency, and his appearance is indicative of physical strength and good-nature.

"I am growing fat," said he to Nollis; "but I console myself by the reflection that stout men have always been the best, and consequently the happiest. All great criminals and tyrants were men of slender bulk."

"True. But genius is thin."

"And Napoleon?"

"Directly he began to grow fat, his good fortune deserted him."

"Well, have it so; but witty men are generally fat."

"Still genius is father to glory."

"But wit implies happiness. Am I to understand, Nollis, that you mean to evaporate into poetry? Epicurism, my fat friend, epicurism is our lot. Whatever we may do to spiritualize ourselves, we shall ever belong to the sensual school. It is our destiny as well as our choice."

By this time, Adolphe had finished his toilette. His costume was simple, neither too much before nor behind the fashion; it was remarkably adapted to his person, and all constraint was skilfully avoided in its adjustment, without the slightest violation of custom or propriety. I had already noticed the exquisite cleanliness and nicety which presided over all the arrangements of his toilette: nothing could be more refined.

"Will this gentleman accompany us?" said Adolphe, turning to me.

"Of course," replied Nollis; "why else did I bring him? Where are we going now?"

"Some distance."

"Indeed!"

"Now don't be alarmed, we are going to Bercy. Sir," he resumed, observing me involuntarily wince at the mention of Bercy, "you must not be too fastidious. I am well acquainted with all the fashionable resorts, and frequently visit them; but

I prefer the good ones. If you would sooner go to Tortoni's, I will accompany you. It is, beyond doubt, the prettiest café in Paris, for breakfast. The sideboard is well supplied with every delicacy, the company is pleasant, and conversation is free and polite: on the whole, I know of no more agreeable repast than a well-appointed breakfast at Tortoni's; but I want something more. We three are sufficiently well born and brought up not to fear spoiling our manners, and we are, moreover, answerable to no one but ourselves for our behaviour. So far as I am concerned, Paris contains individuals of two classes only,—those who are acquainted with me, and those to whom I am not known; the former know who I am, and what need I care for the opinion of the latter? At Bercy, we are sure to find fresh sea as well as fresh-water fish, excellent people delighted with the honour of our company, a charming view from the window, and such wine as is not to be met with elsewhere. Now you know my reasons for selecting Bercy, gentlemen, perhaps you will show cause why Bercy it should not be."

Nollis looked at me, but my mind was made up. I took Adolphe's hand, and exclaimed, "To Bercy, by all means."

Adolphe was perfectly right; we had a capital breakfast. Before we entered the house, he chatted a moment with the pretty oyster girl; and, if I am not mistaken, he patted her cheek. She herself brought in our oysters on a large dish, and laughed as she recommended us to swallow them alive, and in their water. The Chablis was first-rate, golden, and admirably dried and pearled; the rump-steak was seasoned with a sauce, prepared according to Adolphe's own recipe; the soles were dressed after a new method that he had just imported from England; and, finally, a dish of *matelotte*, concocted after the best tradition of the place, crowned the breakfast, which was incessantly moistened by excellent burgundy. Adolphe told us that it was not advisable to drink claret in the morning, and promised, at the same time, to give his reasons at dinner.

Nollis had introduced me as a promising young man, and before breakfast was over, I and Adolphe were the best friends in the world. I was aware that he had come to Paris with a view to study for the bar; but after taking his degrees, he had, without any bad disposition, quietly indulged his natural love of pleasure, almost abandoning his studies. Like most young men without a fortune, he had framed several projects, and involved himself in debt. All his speculations he had successively given up, but his debts remained unpaid. Adolphe's present hobby was literature, the pursuit of which he esteemed a kind of leisure; but he was unable to resist present enjoyment for the sake of the future. Although he was always struggling against fresh difficulties, he was, at the same time, following new pleasures, and used to say that, notwithstanding his troubles, the side of happiness was the strongest in the balance of his joys and miseries. His morals were not extremely severe; he was certainly incapable of a cowardly, dishonest, or bad action. But pleasure had such an attraction for him, that he was ever ready to make any sacrifice to its enjoyment. It was more than his principal affair—it was his only affair: he was constantly running after it, wherever it could be found, and thus contrived to prolong his youth.

He was, after all, desirous of occupying the least possible place in the world; he

cared very little for the independence of his person, provided he could secure the liberty of his tastes. "Give us this day our daily bread." This sentence was his only prayer.

The scene of our conversation was a verandah, illumined by the genial rays of a cloudless spring sun. The river and the quays were animated by the bustling movements of the daily traffic. Steamers were passing up or down the river every instant, and the thousands of pipes and hogsheads of wine and spirits lying along the quay, the busy stir of trade carried on in the midst of bottles and glasses, excited our friend: he drank and spoke, praised the wine, and expressed his admiration of the interesting scene before him. After having much admired and drunk, he partook of coffee, prepared by himself, imbibed three glasses of various liqueurs, and became unsteady. He perceived me looking at him with painful surprise. "You see why I brought you here to breakfast," stammered he: "one cannot take one's cup at Tortoni's: but 'tis shocking to intoxicate oneself at this early hour in the day. I am afraid I have spoken too much; it is a fault—a very great fault—do you understand, young gentleman."

His friend Nollis laughed, and took him under his protection.

It was three o'clock. I was anxious to know how our Viveur would spend the interval between breakfast and dinner, and thought that the best thing for him to do would be to indulge the ante-prandial nap, in imitation of Boileau's prelate.

Adolphe was already outside the door, amusing himself with the oyster-girl, and cracking his jokes with the workmen, who were pleased with his humourous sallies. A hackney-coach passed, when Adolphe hailed the driver, and in a stentorian voice desired him to pull up. We entered the vehicle, and drove to the Champs Elysées.

Adolphe's good humour knew no bounds; he reminded Nollis of his best stories, and of certain merry adventures they had had in company; he dwelt with ludicrous gravity on the miseries of inebriety, expatiated on the mistakes committed under its influence, spoke of the bright flashes of wit that wine alone can inspire, and passed in review various remarkable incidents in the lives of some of their best companions, emphatically styled, by Adolphe, the first "glasses" of their day: the Viveur swears by his glass, as the knight of antiquity used to swear by his sword-blade.

Adolphe's fund of stories and anecdotes seemed inexhaustible, and he had the art of never tiring his delighted auditors: his tales reminded me of a chapter of Gargantua, and of Grandgousier.

Our friend told us of a certain Viveur who, seeing one of his companions, after having been too liberal in his libations to Bacchus, lying insensible in the street, conceived the splendid idea of placing a lantern containing a lighted candle on his body, to save him from being run over by carriages. Of another, who, anxious to make the acquaintance of a gentleman renowned for his convivial qualities, contrived to obtain entrance in the night to the latter's lodgings, and, without awaking him, to lay the cloth, deck the table, and serve up a sumptuous supper. That done, the Viveur, noiseless as a ghost, gently awakened the slumbering bon-vivant, and motioned him to rise from his bed, to take a seat at the table, and to partake of the supper. Both gourmands ate and drank till dawn, without uttering a syllable. At last, about daybreak, the gentleman favoured with this strange visit broke silence,

"You must certainly be B———," said he: "B——— is the only person in the world capable of acting as you have done, and no one but myself could suffer it."

We were told, also, the bon-mot of a Viveur, who, having just come into some property left him by his uncle, gave this laconic account of the funeral:—"We legatees were in tolerably good spirits; to the rest my uncle's death seemed a matter of utter indifference."

Sometimes Adolphe launched into the heroic style. In July 1830, a Viveur had a bottle of champagne iced before a wine-shop, opposite the Louvre, exposed to the fire of the Swiss troops; and having drank it with a friend or two, coolly returned to the attack. A Viveur having his right arm fractured in a duel, quietly remarked to his second—"Now I shall be obliged to carry my glass to my lips with my left hand."

Our modern Lucullus's tales enabled me to appreciate the force of this saying of a Viveur, celebrated for his wit, and universally courted:—"I dine every Wednesday at Mdlle. M———'s: would you believe that she had the ingratitude not to make me a present last New Year's Day?"

We heard the story of the party of Viveurs at Montmorency, who hired a band of blind fiddlers to play to them at dinner. Nothing was said by the convivialists that might offend ears the most polite, and these honest musicians were pleased at the thoughts of having fallen into such innocent company. "They little thought," said Adolphe, "that they were present at the Sabbath of a set of demons, who concealed their wickedness under the language of angels."

The great Viveurs of the present day were next passed in review by Adolphe. He assured us that they are to be found everywhere, in both chambers as well as in the council-room, on the bench as well as among the high officers of state; that they are decorated with orders, enriched, and enobled, but that they very seldom mend. "However they avoid public orgies," said Adolphe, "they indulge secret and mysterious pleasures."

Adolphe owned that he entertained a strong prejudice against fashionable society. He found great fault with the useless luxury, the ungovernable propensity for gambling, the ruinous amours of high life. All his indulgence he reserved for the magnificent suppers by which night is brightened, for the worship of physical beauty, and for the poetry of the senses. In all the glorious excitement of hunting parties and races, in the steeple chase as well as in following the hounds, our Viveur could behold nothing but the prospect of a halt, and an exquisite venison dinner: the cup, elegantly carved, won by the conqueror, brought to his mind no idea but of bumpers of Xeres.

Adolphe's amusing sallies shortened the road to the shooting-gallery. Our friend was received there with acclamations, and welcomed with shouts of joy. In a minute twenty bets were laid and twenty glasses filled with champagne; biscuits were handed round, and amateurs took their aim with one hand, having their wine-glass in the other. Adolphe's star was in the ascendant: though his legs tottered, his hand was steady, and he won every wager.

From the shooting-gallery Adolphe took us to St. Cloud, where we strolled round the park, and each of us drank a bottle of soda-water. Prompt and wonderful was

the effect of this specific; a few minutes before, the thoughts of dinner would have frightened me, but I now began to feel very hungry.

After a short stay at ———'s estaminet—where Adolphe treated us to a glass of absynthe, smoked a pipe of tobacco, and resumed, for a little while, the easy manner he had displayed in the morning at Bercy,—at seven o'clock we sat down to dinner at Very's, not in the public room, at that hour generally filled with people of rank or importance, but in a private room on the first floor. Our bill of fare was simple. We had a dish of Ostend oysters; soup à-la-julienne, trout, roast leg of mutton, beans, and asparagus; claret ordinaire, and iced madeira. Adolphe objected to claret for a breakfast wine, as being too weak to restore the damage done to the constitution over-night, and banished burgundy from the dinner-table, as being too hot, and apt to overload the mental faculties. He would not allow champagne at breakfast, but he admitted no other wine at supper. He esteemed iced madeira to be one of the most brilliant conquests of modern times.

The dinner was long and animated, and Adolphe entertained us with a description of all the varieties of the genus Viveur. He maintained that he was more independent and free than either the epicure or the Sybarite of antiquity; more enlightened than the roué, that fanfaron of vice, much above all similar products of former periods, from Athens to Florence, from the time of Pericles down to the Directory. The Viveur was for him the true representative of a real civilization; not aiming at an ideal and imaginary excellence, but seeking only the realities of life, and following the precept laid down by Adam Smith,—to be, and to be as well as possible; practising, with great ingenuity, two rules professed by two eminent philosophers of the nineteenth century: to enjoy everything—to refuse oneself nothing. Adolphe pretended to be a wise man among the wisest; his life was in constant keeping with the exact tendencies of the age; it represented them all, free from their miserable selfishness. The Viveur owes his existence to a calculating and enlightened age: he is the offspring of reason, exclusively applied to sensations.

In a less elevated sphere, many are the varieties of the Viveur. The artist, who has restored the "cabaret" haunted by his predecessors; the Viveur who partakes of the joy of all, and does not mind forgetting a little his dignity to enjoy animated pleasure without constraint—or who, during several months, abandons himself to the popular whirlwind, as great lords used to go formerly to dance in the "Porcherons;" the one who willingly condemns himself to six days of hard labour, to live fully on the seventh; the Viveur of merry stories, who laughs, sings, drinks, and descends, tottering, the river of life; and at last, the one that nothing can divest from the sweet attractions of his precious bottle, full of ardour for work, but still more fond of indulging his laziness. Beyond this, all is disgusting.

Out of Paris, the Viveur would die of grief or consumption. "The country," said Nollis, "seems to me nothing but an immense safe; I would go there no more than I wish to pass through the kitchen before sitting down to dinner. Provincial palates are stupid: they eat, but they eat without discernment: the country Viveur is not even a gourmand,—he is a glutton."

Of all foreign people, those who are the most congenial to the propensities of the Viveur are certainly the English. Adolphe recollected with sympathetic emotion

that he travelled once from Turin to Paris with an English gentleman, who knew only the different towns where he had been before, by the dining-rooms of the hotels where he had stopped.

Adolphe is member of no singing society, but he knows the best and the cleverest songs of the most popular authors, and he knows, also, many songs that have no acknowledged authors, but which would do credit to any. He is full of sketches of gay life, recollections, caricatures, and jokes, the most grotesque and the most amusing, which are sure to make you laugh outright. He knows better than anybody the way of keeping his companions in high spirits, and he seems as if it were his duty to ensure the happiness of all who surround him. Adolphe is a compound of the artist, the *gastronome*, the good fellow, and the bon-vivant; there is something about him which reminds one at once of Desaugiers, Philibert cadet*, and Don Juan, less his villany and his love of women. Of all types, happy, heavenly, or devilish, he has taken what can best compose an intellectual being, exclusively addicted to pleasure. Morally speaking, here is his picture, drawn by himself:—"I have no vices," he used to say, "but I have almost all faults."

His existence has had only one end: to know, love, and serve pleasure, and in such manner to enjoy the realities of life. His porter is his only servant; he has taught and drilled him, and we may almost say brought him up; he is to Adolphe more than a servant, he is a friend; that man has for him the solicitude and the love of a parent. "What is generally your first business when I come home?" one day Adolphe said to him. "Why, I look carefully at my master, to know if I may let him walk by himself, or if I must lead him, or carry him." Thus he has made a catechism for the use of his porter.

Adolphe hates study, but ennui is what he fears most in this world; he is less afraid of pain. The future has to him no value; he does not know distinctly what it is, and does not believe in it. He enjoys only the present.

He left us early, after our dinner at Very's. He was invited to a supper of eminent Viveurs. Great toasts were to be proposed, and a grand match for the Herculean cup was intended between the notabilities of the meeting. "It will be," said Adolphe to Nollis, "a renewal of the great deeds that we have performed together." In fact, it was to him a tournament, and he prepared himself for it, like a noble knight, by a long walk and the use of sherbets. It was understood that each member of the pack was, before sitting down to supper, to have his name and address written upon a label attached to his person. This means was devised to recognize the dead when the battle would be over, for it was a deadly contest.

The king of Viveurs has a very strong constitution; he thinks that there is some intellectual merit in being in good health. The death of one of his illustrious companions was announced before him some days ago. "I cannot believe it," rejoined Adolphe, "he was too clever to die so soon." He was quite right; his friend is still alive. In his opinion, fools only can think of making a short and joyous life. The Viveur tries to embellish his existence, to enjoy it the longer.

The Viveur's hell is the gout. It is to him what remorse is to a criminal life.

* A celebrated personage of a French comedy, "Les Deux Philiberts."



THE WET NURSE.



THE WET-NURSE.

BY AMÉDÉE ACHARD.



SUFFICIENTLY protected by his bachelor state from the resentment of all present and future nurses, which would otherwise have fallen heavily upon his race, the author of the present paper has to expose many little vices, many worldly peccadillos and worthless qualities; and nothing, bachelor as he is, could give him the necessary courage for his bold task but the consoling thought that, generally, wet-nurses cannot read.

Whatever might have written Jean Jacques Rousseau upon that subject, for a long time to come, and perhaps to the end of the world, the ladies in France, and particularly in Paris, will not suckle their children. Most of them are, no doubt, excellent mothers, and irreproachable in their conduct; they have been taught to respect opinion, and to fear scandal. They know to a fraction the number of smiles and waltzes they may hazard without the least blemish to their reputation, and they would, perhaps, suckle the offspring that Providence sends them, had not their good intentions to contend against two insuperable obstacles,—the wishes of their husbands, and their love of pleasure.

For these unfortunate ladies, society is an imperious despot, to whom they must yield obedience from the fear of risking the cheerfulness of their homes.

The ball admits of no rival, and if young married ladies were to devote their lives to the cares of maternity, what would become of fetes, dances, and concerts? The bedchamber would be a cloister, inhabited by solitude, and many high dignitaries of state, many satraps of finance, would deplore the practice of a virtue which would seclude from the world those charming beings, who, by the power of their wit, and the charm of their smiles, lend them, in many instances, a material assistance in the execution of their projects.

Moreover, in this calculating age, when everything is reduced to figures, husbands know pretty well that there are many economical expenses, and expensive economies; they are aware that all women, however bright their eyes or brilliant their complexion, are more or less consumptive, more or less liable to gastric affections. Suckling would only hasten the developement of the malady which their rosy lips inhale in the warm and perfumed atmosphere of balls; and, the baby once weaned, a tour in Italy or Switzerland, or a journey to the waters of the Pyrénees, would be indispensable, to restore the precious health weakened by the duties of maternity.

Thus, everything considered, it is less expensive to have a nurse than to travel post with an interesting invalid, who seldom fails to make her sufferings the excuse for indulging her most extravagant whims. All husbands know this: therefore, when, in conformity to the divine law, which, from the beginning of the world, has enjoined man to increase and multiply, a rich lady in the high class of society is near her confinement, the family doctor is desired to look out for a young and healthy nurse.

Through the agency of this personage, who tries not to lose his importance under his youthful appearance, the nurse is soon brought from the country. Whether she arrive from Normandy with the traditional high cap, or from Bourbonnais with the straw hat turned up and trimmed with velvet, she is always a strong and powerful young woman, whose good organization is shown by the vigour of her form; and it is conspicuous enough that she bids fair to supply an abundant and wholesome nourishment to the infant sleeping in his cradle. She is therefore immediately installed; her room communicates, by a closet, with that of her mistress, and all luxurious comforts are provided for her.

This woman, fresh from her native fields, used only to the hard work of her household, the unceasing labour of a farm, transplanted suddenly into the midst of splendour, is at first bewildered with the riches that surround her; she dares scarcely use the fine things intended for her service, nor permit herself to touch the fine furniture in her room. Silent and timid, she obeys without replying, moves without noise, looks on the ground, and supplies her nursling with sweet and wholesome food. Her temper seems as smooth as her cheeks; mild, attentive, modest, and kind, she is always smiling, and grateful for everything. Her disposition appears as calm and undisturbed as the flow of a little rivulet over a bed of sand and moss; and nothing can shade the soft light of her eyes, or wrinkle the surface of her smooth and polished forehead. The young mother congratulates herself upon the lucky chance of meeting with such a treasure of a nurse, and is astonished that so much angelic sweetness is to be found in the garb of a woman.

However, it is only the brilliant and cloudless morning preceding a stormy day. A

month has hardly elapsed, when already little fits of bad temper manifest themselves, and cause that mouth to pout, which hitherto had never opened but to smile; frowns disfigure the smooth forehead; quick words, grumbled in a low voice, accompany abrupt gestures, which deprive some china cup or saucer of its fair proportions, and the child sleeps, if it can, without its lullaby.

The Wet-nurse is a true daughter of Eve. The lady of the house discovers that the angel is only a woman, and what a woman!—full of deceit, selfishness, and obstinacy.

However, the transformation is not effected with the stroke of a magician's wand: the woman unveils herself slowly,—her progress follows rather an oblique direction, but you may be quite sure that it will not be long before the mask is entirely thrown aside. The first symptoms of the change are generally shown in the servants' hall. For some time her timidity, as well as the cunning natural to country people, has covered with a deceitful veil the inequalities of her temper; but they now break forth at the table where assemble cooks, footmen, grooms, and ladies' maids, to devour the good things of this world, and to repose from their laziness.

The wing of a fowl is often the apple of discord; the *chasseur* claims it, the nurse will have it. The right of precedence of the great powers of the antechamber is warmly discussed. One dwells upon the importance of his office, and the lace upon his embroidered coat; the other brings forward the sacredness of her employment, which leaves to her care the heir-presumptive to the mansion. The hall is divided into two camps, but the envy that all the lower servants cherish in secret for those who are admitted to the apartments of the family, gives the majority to the chasseur. The wing of the fowl falls into his plate, and the Nurse leaves the table turning in her hand her apron, and in her heart projects of vengeance. She is sulky one day, two days, nay, even three days, if necessary; her face is most imperturbably serious. She affects the disdainful anger of a great lady insulted by low people; even her dress is neglected, and lamentable sighs heave her bosom. The anxious mother tries to penetrate the distressing mystery, carefully hidden from her with the sole view to give it more importance. At last, after a thousand turnings and circumlocutions, interrupted by many plaintive exclamations, the history of the wing of the fowl is related in all its enormity, with the addition of many little falsehoods and softly-uttered calumnies, which blacken the poor chasseur, and make herself appear in the likeness of an injured and persecuted dove. Poor victim to an infernal plot, she is withering like a flower deprived of air and sun; she is refused necessaries, she who would shed the last drop of her blood for the dear infant she loves so much. Her increasing embonpoint, the glittering roundness of her neck, ornamented with a double chin, might give a startling denial to this melancholy elegy: but in all this the mother only sees her child. She has so often been told that children can only thrive when suckled by good-tempered nurses, that she fears already to see her offspring fall a victim to the culinary misfortunes of his nurse. The chasseur is immediately sent for, severely reprimanded, and seriously informed that the delicate stomach of a wet-nurse has peremptory rights, to which obedience is due. From this day a silent but deep hatred springs up between her and the other servants; but, proud of her position, and vain of her first triumph, she

laughs at the efforts of the coalition she overrules from that day, in the kitchen, as well as in the drawing-room.

Women, like children, are unconscious of their strength until they have tried it, but directly they know it, they use and abuse it without pity and mercy. The success of her first attempt having shown the Nurse the extent of her power, she hastens to put it again to the proof.

Transplanted from the country, where, from morning till night, she was hard at work, to the town, where the cares of nursing would be her only occupation, it is to be feared that the silence and shade of a mansion in the Chaussée d'Antin would not agree with the health of the robust nurse, accustomed to activity, to fresh air, and sunshine; the change would be too rapid and too great: therefore, to avoid all evil consequences, and to keep her blood in free circulation, according to the doctor's advice, certain little duties are given to her, the performance of which requires a little exertion without any fatigue. She has only to arrange and clean her room, to make the bed, and to prepare the cradle.

At first, humble and attentive, she fulfils her task with great punctuality and unequalled zeal; but such praiseworthy industry is of no long duration; her natural good qualities cannot resist the breath of bad passions. After her victory over her fellow-servants, she thinks it very wrong of her mistress to let her fatigue herself sweeping and cleaning like a mere housemaid; such low occupations are incompatible with her position: she is paid to be nurse, and not a servant. A fresh struggle then begins, which ends, as before, in the triumph of the Nurse. She murmurs in a low tone, sighs, groans, and complains of distressing pains, which proceed from great weakness. If her mistress feigns not to understand her, the pains become intolerable, the appetite ceases, and a complete prostration of strength ensues. The doctor, when consulted, discovers no fever; but the mother, fearful for her child, prescribes immediately the most absolute repose; and the return of the Nurse's health and spirits coincides with the given order. The Nurse has again conquered. An under-servant is forthwith charged with the care of her apartment; and, like her mistress, she orders and finds fault if every thing is not in order an hour after she condescends to rise.

However, the child thrives, it begins to use its little limbs, and wants air and exercise. The doctor advises its being taken out, and the nurse and the child are sent to the Tuileries,—that sunny resort for infancy and old age. All this is very well; but at the end of a short time the Nurse again shows progressive symptoms of discontent. A cross answer is ever ready on her lips, and her ill-humour is particularly observable on her return from her walk. At last, after minute inquiry, her mistress discovers that the distance from the Rue du Mont Blanc to the Tuileries is too great for a poor woman who, a few months since, could walk three or four leagues with the greatest ease. Now her strength is unequal to a few turns in the gardens, with alternate sittings on the chairs arranged under the shade of the horse-chestnut-trees; her limbs tremble, and she feels that it is only her devotedness to the child that enables her to endure this daily labour. She gets no rest at night, the baby screams and cries, and in the morning the Nurse's eyes are heavy. The mother is alarmed, and, anxious for the restoration of her health, she is willing to

try everything to attain that paramount object. The next day her mistress's carriage is stationed at the gate of the Tuileries, waiting the Nurse's pleasure to go home.

But pride, like idleness, is insatiable. It is not enough to go home in the carriage; she must go out in it, drawn by two horses elegantly harnessed; and it would appear that what a Wet-nurse wills, God wills, for she soon contrives not to touch with her feet the pavement of the street leading to the Tuileries.

The Nurse receives to the day her monthly wages, which are spent indiscriminately to satisfy her uncontrolled whims; and as by bad management they are soon absorbed und wasted, it often happens that she seeks vainly for a crown in the desert of her pockets or her boxes. It is then that she becomes learned in the great science of all the ministers of finance, and necessity teaches her how to increase a regular budget by additional chapters, extraordinary credits, and indemnified expenses,—vulgar routine of financial measures, specially adopted by representative governments. The Nurse stands before her master and mistress in the situation of a minister of finance before the Chambers: she begs for votes of money. But she has a great hold upon the mother's feelings, and with wonderful skill she makes the best of her advantage. The Nurse, at that game, could beat the most experienced diplomatist: there are no tricks she cannot play, no strings too difficult to move, no intrigues too intricate to attain her object. She knows how to be alternately tractable and stiff, good-tempered and cross, gloomy and cheerful, merry and sad, artless and deep, impudent and timid; but she invariably brings forward her nursling —the ram which batters down all obstacles; the sinew of that invisible but indefatigable war that she incessantly wages against her master's purse. The nursling is a hammer and block, in constant use to coin fresh money.

The extra allowances she obtains without seeming to exact them, come under all sorts of forms—in hard cash on anniversary days—in all kinds of presents, whenever the opportunity occurs: gowns, silk handkerchiefs, caps, collars, aprons, everything is acceptable to her insatiable vanity. The golden chain and cross have long been the objects of her desire, but there is the baby cutting its first tooth, and she generally obtains them on that great solemnity.

She shares with the lady's maid, acting *camera major*, the left-off wardrobe of her mistress; to the one that dress, and this to the other. The division is generally made amicably, for, among the servants, the lady's-maid is the only one with whom the Nurse lives in peace,—and yet it is an armed peace. They are two powers that respect, but envy one another.

Of the Nurse's wages we may say,—what is often the case with many things of this world,—the accessories are better than the principal; and it so happens that the multifarious indirect allowances she has pocketed under all shapes during the month are much above her salary.

Meantime, the chrysalis has shaken off her first skin. After a few months of residence in Paris, the coarse envelope, under which was concealed the pretty and rosy fly, has disappeared. The country girl has thrown away one by one, and little by little, every piece of her rustic costume: you could no longer recognize the native of Berry by her straw bonnet, or the "Cauchoise" by her high cap. There are few who can withstand the allurements of coquetry, and a smart dress soon supersedes

the peasant's plan attire. Her cap is now trimmed with handsome lace; the silken strings of her shoes are carefully crossed over fine white stockings, the sleeves of her gown are fashionably cut, and her shoulders are covered by an embroidered collar. One would suppose her a grisette going to a rendezvous. These improvements have taken place slowly and almost imperceptibly. The invidious eye of cooks can alone perceive them at once, from the white cotton petticoat up to the Swedish gloves.

Good-looking, healthy, smart, courteous, and ever on the look-out for admirers, the Nurse, in all her glory, struts at the Tuileries, in company with her sisterhood, where babies amuse themselves in the best manner they can, by sucking their thumbs or their corals. Their attentive guardians have many other things to attend to than to watch them. Nurses are not to abdicate flirtation, that everlasting comfort of feminine minds.

At the Tuileries the Nurse holds levées. Her drawing-room is a clump of chestnut trees; she is enthroned on a bench, or two chairs, and her admirers pay her their respects either in the walk of the Feuillants in the summer, or, in the winter, at the "Petite Provence."* The number of her beaux increases or is reduced according to the variations which take place in the garrison of Paris. A member of the statistical society could calculate at a glance the number of regiments garrisoned in Paris, by the number of soldiers standing or loitering by her side. The artilleryman is there conspicuous by his red aigrette and his heavy walk on the gravel; the horse-soldier goes forward and backward, and the rays of the sun glitter on his long sabre and polished spurs; the foot-soldier passes with his regimental cap slightly inclined on one side, and his little finger on the seam of his inexpressibles, as you may see him at the review of his regiment. There also may shine the golden helmet of the fireman, whose inflammable propensities have won for him a proverbial name. There a conflict of gallantry is daily going on, where competitors vie against each other with cakes, sugar-plums, and échaudés,—modest offerings of a soldier-like love, of which each pretender claims the exclusive privilege.

Here a serious question presents itself to our consideration. Does the Nurse, during her temporary residence in Paris, preserve her former innocence, and remain there as virtuous as novel-writers pretend her to be in her village? Let us at once declare it; notwithstanding certain suspicious signs to the contrary, the Nurse's character remains generally as unspotted as her apron. But, as an impartial and true historian, we beg leave to say that she is chiefly indebted for the purity of her Parisian life to the very active watch kept upon her by her mistress. The flesh is weak, but the spirit is willing, as every body knows, and perhaps ——. But it is of no use to speculate upon intentions when they are unsupported by facts.

During her daily peregrinations to the shady walks of the Tuileries, the Nurse makes a certain number of acquaintances, plainly dressed in frock coats, or rather in regimentals, who occasionally visit her in the mansion. It is not uncommon to see one of them quietly seated at the dinner-table in the servant's hall, with nice slices of mutton in his plate, and a bottle of wine before him. To all questions that

* Two walks in the garden of the Tuileries, the second of which is sheltered from the winter winds.

might be asked of the Nurse about it, she has a ready-made answer, invariably the same, and invariably adopted by all nurses in Paris, Brest, or Marseilles; every one of these acquaintances is a countryman, and in case of need a country cousin. It would indeed be ungracious to refuse a bit of dinner occasionally to the relatives of the woman who suckles the young heir, for it is not impossible that the answer may chance to be the truth. Therefore, the Nurse is, in some respects, at liberty to do the honours of the servants' hall, but great care is taken not to let her do them *en tête-à-tête*.

Eighteen or twenty months have now elapsed; a revolution is going to take place in the material education of the child; his stomach requires a more substantial food; to the milk succeeds pap. From this moment, to protract as long as possible the sweet enjoyments of her easy existence, the cunning nurse has recourse to all sorts of tricks. To put off the fatal instant, she leaves no means untried. Her active mind is incessantly engaged in the discovery of new ones. A quarter of an hour before the abominable food, the object of her hatred, is presented to the baby, she takes care to give him a superabundance of milk; and the child, who would willingly suck up to the time of his classical education, repulses the food with horror, unheeding of the caresses lavished upon him. This will do for a little while; but at last the decisive hour is at hand. Notwithstanding all the Nurse's tricks, she cannot put off any longer the weaning of the baby, and her reign is over. She parts with her nursling with tears in her eyes, and a sorrowful heart. A magdalen could hardly repent more bitterly; but it is not her love for the child that makes her so miserable; other feelings are also blended with her sorrows. She weeps over her wages, her extra allowances, and the good cheer she has so long enjoyed. With the clamorous expression of her grief, her stomach has as much to do as her heart.

As to the maternal affection, which, according to some philanthropists, goes along with suckling, experience shows, alas! that it is not of long duration, and seldom resists absence. It generally lasts no longer than the cause that produces it, and subsides when it ceases to act. There are, however, some exceptions to this general rule.

After the Nurse has left her first situation, she is fully sensible of what she has lost, and is, of course, very anxious to regain it. Sometimes, by means of very extraordinary exertions, she contrives to procure a second child to suckle immediately after the first; but the case is rare, as prudent mothers generally object to a milk already old. More generally, the nurse returns to her home, to live there with her husband and family; but she has lost her habits of industry, and the recollection of the luxuries of Parisian life haunt her in her farm, where she hardly finds the most ordinary comforts. Then she tries to persuade her husband, a good strong labourer, simple and good-natured, that paternity is a capital source of riches, and that every child God sends him, brings an annual income without any trouble for him. Thus, his fortune will be made when he shall have favoured the world with a half-dozen of little cherubs. The farmer cannot resist such decisive arguments, and so complete is his conviction, that, with God's assistance, nine months after her return, the Nurse is delivered of a second child, or, to use her own language, she obtains an additional income. She soon goes to Paris again, and her strong health

and good looks obtain immediately a situation for her. The farmer's wife is once more a nurse, and she begins anew her work, her poutings, her walks, and her pecuniary extortions. During a second series of twenty months, she squeezes a new family, and turning to account her former experience, she takes more advantage of the maternal feelings of her second mistress. She now saves money, and sends successively to the country some little sums, which, accumulated, will pay the purchase money of a mill, or a piece of ground. In the meantime, she heaps up a quantity of clothes, for which she has only to thank her mistress; and by means of some economy and an easy management, she lays up a store of comforts for her future life.

At thirty years of age, her career is at an end. The Nurse has then four or five children of her own, perhaps more. Her husband's farm is now his own property, and it is increased in extent by the addition of a few adjoining acres, paid for in milk.

Suckling is now a lucrative profession, and is held in high and honourable estimation in the country. It is considered as one of the regular employments of peasant women; and when a healthy young girl marries the village miller, or a young farmer just setting up for himself, the profits attendant on the future exercise of this profession are reckoned by her mother as a great addition to the marriage portion.



THE "REVENDEUSE A LA TOILETTE."



THE "REVENDEUSE A LA TOILETTE."

BY ARNOULD FRÉMY.



A LADY passes you in the street, followed at a short distance by a provincially awkward and timid young man: she is one of those who may be freely followed and escorted without reflection or from instinct, as one might carelessly watch the capricious motions of a may-fly, or the fantastic flight of a butterfly. She trips along, and as she walks affects a studied attitude; her flexible and slender form resembles at once the wasp's and the serpent's; her foot is delicately confined in a bronzed morocco brodequin, and if you approach her you smell musk and patchouli. This indeed is quite enough to dazzle and turn the head of a sentimental young solicitor's clerk, who has never ventured to address a word of gallantry in the open air—one of those young men who in the country are invariably termed "very steady," and by the gay nymphs and roystering blades who resort to the Grande Chaumière, a "plodding bumpkin."

All at once the young man's manners undergo a complete change, and he amends the cut of his clothes: he becomes a dandy; wears yellow gloves, recklessly turns down his shirt collar, and indulges the luxury of a pink or carnation in his buttonhole. Whence this sudden metamorphosis of dress and appearance? He one day met in the street, and in a fit of enthusiasm followed one of the perfumed young ladies described in the opening paragraph, and this rencounter produced a com-

plete revolution in his life and future prospects. Again he sees and meets her, times out of number; her brilliant image incessantly haunts his imagination; he fancies himself driving with her in the Bois de Boulogne, and dreams he is yawning through the last new ballet in her box at the opera. All this passes through his disturbed mind when he is employed at his office, and not unfrequently absorbs his thoughts while his fingers are busy engrossing a deed of separation. After a few months of hopeless passion, the young man becomes pale and thin, and begins to neglect his duty. He is lost to the law. His livid and distorted face is encircled by a handsome gothic beard, and perhaps he turns vaudevillist or playwright; but it is quite certain that his professional prospects are ruined. All this through having at a street-corner met an impossible love, in the garb of an elegantly-dressed and perfumed young lady. Musk must have engendered lots of scribblers!

Presently the scene changes to the shop-front of a *Magasin de Nouveautés:* every window is tastefully set out with all descriptions of fashionable apparel; silks, velvets, lavantines, Cashmeres, figured muslins, China crape, pekinets, gros-de-Naples, brocaded satins, Valenciennes and Mechlin lace, mousselines-de-laine et de-coton, &c., *ad infinitum:* each of these articles ticketed and marked at a reduced price, and nothing neglected capable of attracting female attention, robbing tender hearts of innocence, and in its place implanting envy, wild desires, and ambitious dreams—those monsters of coquetry which, with diamond teeth, gnaw and devour the youth and inexperience of pretty women.

A young lady with braided hair, a small basket in one hand and one of Rodolphe's solfegios in the other, takes her station before the shop-window. If you could look into her bosom, you would see her guileless heart violently beating and reflecting back the gay colours of the dazzling stuffs on which she is so intently gazing; you would see it in turns glazed, figured, brocaded, incessantly haunted by wishes of every glittering hue of the rainbow, by fringed fancies, by flounces, by sky-blue hopes, by wings of azure and lace. The young lady sighs, as, with despairing looks, she measures the distance that separates her black apron and hand-basket from the ells of point-lace, and the splendid furred mantillas exposed for sale. Every morning, on her way to her warehouse, or to the Academy, the poor girl stops at this shop-window, and is, during the space of a quarter of an hour, a duchess or a countess—through the plate-glass. The rest of her time is spent in binding shoes, or practising fioritures, under the direction of M. Ponchard. Alas! to be able to see all these treasures of luxury only through the magic prism of a window! She has not, like the great lady, the privilege of having every article submitted to her, of examining and handling everything on the counter, sufficiently excused by a handsome equipage waiting for her in the street, and a tall livery-servant stationed at the shop-door. The rich alone may turn over as well as admire the tradesman's goods, without being obliged to purchase.

What would that simple-minded countryman, standing beneath the balcony over the way, and smitten with the fair nymph who graces the garret-window above—what would he say, and what would you, O! Olympe, Amanda, Modeste, or Virginie! —what would you say, if some one were to come and tell you that, not in twelve months, not at some indefinite future time, but to-day, this very night, if you like, all

that this morning you devoured with your eyes, through Burty or Gagelin's window, shall be given to you, absolutely offered you, without anything being asked in return, not even your own innocence;—the gros-de-Naples gown, the shawl trimmed with lace, the white crape drawn-bonnet, the aristocratic fan with coloured landscapes after Watteau, the embroidered handkerchief, the morocco brodequins:—in a word, an enchanting, finished, and irresistible toilette, with the assistance of which you may safely claim the title of lady, unless you prefer being to-night a queen in the quadrilles at Ranelagh?

And you, young man, fascinated by the fair enslaver you lately met, throw Faublas out of your window, and waste no more money bribing porters. The lady whom you have seen shining at so many "first nights," or, like a morning flower, sauntering beneath the shade of the trees on the Boulevarts, whose slightest motions have not escaped you, whose steps you have been watching—know that she wholly and solely belongs, body and chattels, to another woman, who is more than her creator, her dress-maker, or her guardian-angel, since she dispenses out her charms, or at least the means of showing them to the best advantage. This Metternich of fashion and of love, this female cameleon, this sphynx of a hundred riddles, this thousand-eyed Argus it is, who, *incognito*, controls and regulates the fluctuations and the course of love's exchange—who is the agent of its rises and falls—who, serpent-like, glides and finds entrance everywhere;—an incalculable power, sovereign bank, hidden, but irresistible domination;—in a word, a marvellous, incomparable, and unique creature, whom doubtless the reader has already recognized as the "Revendeuse à la Toilette."

The prettiest woman in the Chaussée d'Antin is stretched on her sofa unwell and complaining; like many fragile ladies of that fashionable quarter of Paris, she is subject to nervous affections, and has almost as many creditors as nerves.

"Rosalie, mind I am at home to no one, absolutely no one." These instructions are scarcely given, when the door-bell is rung, and Mme. Alexandre almost immediately afterwards enters the room.

How would it be possible to refuse admittance to Mme. Alexandre? The lady is in want of nothing; she has heaps of dresses, shawls, and furs, and many that she never wears: but no matter; no human power could prevent Mme. Alexandre from emptying her bundles, opening her boxes, and covering the chairs, tables, and sofa with shawls, lace, furs, ribbons, and all the paraphernalia of a milliner's shop. Resist all this tempting display if you can; only look at this mantilla, this Cashmere, the trimming of this dress! And all so new, so fresh, and never worn.

The languid lady rises from her sofa, and arranging her hair under a transparent gauze bonnet that she is tempted to try on, says, as she looks at herself in her psyche, "Really I am just now so poor, that ——"

"Not of the slightest consequence, dearest madam," interrupts the Revendeuse; "a little bill at two months will do as well as cash. Will those terms suit? You are truly charming in that bonnet. You need not ring, I have got a stamp in my pocket. If I were you, I would tie the ribbons a little lower. You know that the old gouty Prince * * *, who has the fleetest horses in Paris, adores you. Sup-

pose I say at six weeks, instead of two months; that will suit me better. How nicely you look, my darling, in that bonnet and shawl. Little N * * *, of the Opera, will die of vexation when she sees you. Shall I trouble you to sign?"

On quitting this customer, Mme. Alexandre repairs to a neighbouring entresol, inhabited by M. Alphonse, one of the yellow-gloved habitués—we may say debtors—of the Café de Paris. Is the gentle reader surprised at Mme. Alexandre carrying blond lace, Cashmeres, and bonnets, to a frequenter of the Café de Paris? We crave his patience, and invite him to read on.

"Oh! good morning, Alexandre; how are you, my dear?"

"So so, M. Alphonse. I have just been calling on a certain lady; she requested me to ask you whether you prefer a pelerine trimmed with sable or chinchilla?"

"Egad! I do not care a doit. Chinchilla, chinchilla! that sounds like the name of a mare. By the way—good b'ye, good b'ye, Alexandre. You know that I have nothing to do with the lady's expenses."

"Certainly, Madame would not for a moment permit such a thing. She merely wishes me to ask you for your opinion, your taste is so excellent. Besides, she has found out that M. de * * *—you know who I mean—the pale young man who plays so deep at ——'s, has laid a wager, that Mademoiselle Anastaise shall outshine every other beauty at the Opera to-night."

"Damn the blockhead! What's the price of this famous pelerine, trimmed with chinchilla?"

"Oh! what you like, as usual; you know I have no prices with you; only give me a little bill—at two months, or say at six weeks, if you like that as well. I have a stamp about me."

In Turcaret's days, the Revendeuse was called Mme. Jacob, or Mme. La Ressource: at the present time her name is Mme. Alexandre. Her name is changed, but the trade properly so called is still the same; it requires infinite tact, a mixture of crafty policy, coolness, good-nature, boldness, and humility:—in short, diplomatic talents of the first order.

The Revendeuse doubtless is open to blame and censure in the name of public morals; but her profession may be considered under various aspects. After all, what is her trade? She affords eminent and incontestible services to a certain class of individuals, who, were it not for her, would in vain look for credit, tradesmen, dresses, and advances of money. She is a kind of household providence, necessarily with her weak side, and also with her useful and meritorious qualities. She may plunge you into debt and ruin you without the least concern, but she sometimes retrieves and saves you. No one can make a fortune without debts and a little usury.

Thus, a Revendeuse one morning surprises a fashionable lady at home, enveloped in her peignoir, and a prey to bitter grief: poor dear lady! Abandoned the day before by her kind protector; with him fled her five hundred francs a-month. The Revendeuse enters in the midst of her bemoanings: "Dry your tears, my dear! here is wherewithal to shine among the most elegant dames in Paris, and this very day to regain your position. I know your dread of acceptances, and your aversion to the sight of a stamp, and am willing to let you have, on hire, a complete toilette

—feathers, velvet, lace, jewels, and all, for a week, or for a month: you may subscribe even for six months of coquetry and brilliant dresses." Find us a creature more accommodating than that! Is it not genius, thus to be able to realize a profit of fifteen or twenty per cent., by taking compassion on the misfortunes and faded garments of a pretty woman? Alas! why has not every trade its Mme. La Ressource? Why do not the painter and the poet enjoy equal privileges? But the system itself of the usury is deplorable. Money is advanced on a pretty face, but genius will not be taken in pledge: Parnassus is as yet without a pawnbroker.

Let us not however confound the Revendeuse with the shopkeeper (*marchande*). The race of the latter is lost in the common flock of ordinary travelling tradesfolks; she sells, trades, and retails, like everybody else; she has a visiting connexion of several fashionable ladies, whom she enables to satisfy their passion for novelty; but this is merely every-day trading: the woman will speak of her conscience and her morals; we believe that she has probity, and that she pays a regular license.

Not so the Revendeuse. She confines her circle of customers to the equivocal sphere of coquettes who do not pretend to be incorruptible; but nature has bestowed on her, or, if you will, lent her without interest, a considerable share of genius. This genius shines conspicuous in every action of her life, particularly in making a purchase; for the Revendeuse buys also, and this is the most important branch of her profession, and at the same time her most admirable qualification in her customers' eyes. Admire her extraordinary talent! On her closed hand she presents to you some article of dress, say a pink satin bonnet. Her praises would almost tempt one to fall on one's knees and worship the flowers that adorn it, and to lose oneself in admiration of the ribbon, the feathers, the crape, the lace, that are lavished on the fascinating piece of finery:—and so tasteful, so fashionable, so new!

But should the purchaser feel inclined to part with the same bonnet before the Revendeuse has left the room, the simple circumstance of passing from the hands of the Revendeuse, as a seller, into the hands of the Revendeuse as a buyer, makes the bonnet ten years old, and sacrifices cent. per cent. of its fashion. The ribbons, twenty minutes before as fresh as a rose, are now frightfully faded and crumpled. Who would wear such a bonnet? At noon, pink, and nothing but pink, was worn; but at twenty minutes after twelve, "Oh dear! who wears pink this summer? If it were yellow, lilac, coquelicot, or grey, something might be done; but pink is almost as sombre as mourning."

It is certain that in the gestures, the attitude, the language of the veritable Revendeuse, there is something that embellishes, magnifies, and confers a lustre on the articles she sells, and that at the same time depreciates and deteriorates what she buys. She is unsurpassed in this particular: her hand, like Midas', turns to gold all it touches, according to the touchstone of her commerce. A Cashmere comes from her box a real India shawl, and will be returned to it a simple Lyons Cashmere. When next produced, it will have become the legitimate and authentic produce of Sirinagur. Remarkable woman! to possess the gift of thus baptizing and conferring a country on the erratic stuffs and questionable goods she carries about! She sells everything, and will buy everything; she would sell you even the pope's slipper, if you would pay a reasonable profit.

Where does she live? Where are her warehouse and her household gods situate? Who can tell? To speak properly, she has no other lodgings or home than the pavement and staircases that she tramps from morning till night, carrying an immense wooden bandbox tied round with a piece of list: she has lodgings in some obscure corner, but very rarely has a shop. It is generally believed that she connives with the police, but nothing can be more untrue, for though the police occasionally sell, they never buy: like certain private gambling-houses, she enjoys a sort of unacknowledged tolerance. Her lodging is very meanly furnished, and resembles a hiding-place; it contains only presses, and it is easy to perceive that its occupant is almost constantly out of doors. She has many aliases, and changes her name as often as her customers change their bonnets.

Her personal appearance is simple, and is extremely well known in Paris.

Fancy a stout portly woman, between forty and fifty, her nose grimed with snuff, with a pocketed black apron, an ample plaid shawl that reaches to her heels, a puce silk gown, a straw bonnet, worn slightly on one side; a wooden bandbox under her arm, the other hand planted on her hip; the curls of her front dismally hanging in her eyes, a gold watch at her waist, pearl drop-earrings, rings on every finger; a pinched-up mouth, squinting eyes, teeth as large as dominoes, and wearing pattens:—such is the Revendeuse.

All dialects are familiar to her, and especially that of the south. High in her estimation stands that class of traders with uncertain profits and hidden manœuvres, lenders on pledge, itinerant jewellers, tailors from Havre or Haiti, who exchange new clothes for old, purchasers of pawnbroker's duplicates, speculators living in cellars, who occasionally leave their heirs a million francs in Monaco coin and protested bills.

Morally considered, the Revendeuse's traffic stands open to severe reproaches, as guilty at once in its origin, and by the underhand dealings used to carry it on. Perhaps we should slightly darken the background of the picture, to bring out in the distance the faces of certain ruined females bearing the indelible stamp of shame and despair. Quite certain it is that more than one innocent being has fallen a prey to temptation, incessantly thrown in her way in the shape of lace and ribbons. The Revendeuses are indefatigable satanic counsellors, who mercifully attack women on their weakest side—vanity and love of display; they entice them into their snares, and are constantly on the look-out for more tempting baits. It is too often the attractive power of Cashmeres and lace that, step by step, leads a woman to the last refuge of vice and sorrow, which ought to have for founder the richest and most considerable of the whole tribe of Revendeuses—the Hospital.

But how should is be otherwise. For some time to come, manners in France will go on lightly skimming over the surface of great moral questions. We have philosophers and moralists; but while we commend their just recriminations, we do not hasten to adopt their reforms. Thus, before she is proclaimed a great abuse, an acknowledged scandal, a great social immorality, the Revendeuse is, and will doubtless long remain to the public—*i. e.*, those who never have any dealings with her—simply what she was in the time of Le Sage and Regnard, a character on the stage.



THE PEER OF FRANCE.



THE PEER OF FRANCE.

BY MARIE AYCARD.



IT may be necessary to observe, before we speak of the Peer of France, that the Peerage has gained by the Revolution. Before 1789, the nobility, as a body, had no political rights; they formed no part of the Government, their privileges were limited to the useless prerogative of sitting in parliament, and they were reduced to a right of "veto," which was constantly evaded by orders in council. It was Louis XVIII. who constituted the Peerage a third power in the State; the Revolution of July confirmed the work of the Exile of Hartwell; yet, in 1830, the bench of bishops disappeared; one spiritual Peer only came to acknowledge the election of a king by the sovereignty of the people—this was the Abbé de Montesquiou; we saw him enter in his black dress, with his powdered hair, the short mantle floating on his shoulders, and his three-cornered hat placed discreetly under his left arm; he murmured the oath with a voice nearly inaudible, sat for a moment near the Ministers, then left the house, to return no more; and with him vanished from our eyes the last example of a Priest in the character of a Legislator and a Judge. Since the Charter of 1830, the circle from within which the monarch may select his Peers has been greatly enlarged,—presidents of commercial boards, academicians, bankers, landed proprietors, may all be named Peers: the aristocracy of birth no longer sits alone in the House; she is hand in hand with the men of the people, whose tact or

whose talent have made their political fortunes. You may find, among these "lordships," one who has commenced his career as fourth clerk to a bailiff; another, who, with apron-girt waist, was shopman to one of those traffickers whose profession seems devoted to the jests of farce-writers, and the tricks of the sharper, namely, a grocer! These new men are in a wretched minority in the House, and conciliate it neither with a jealous democracy, nor even with the nation, which regards them with a suspicious eye, because imagining (doubtless wrongfully) that the Peerage regrets the departure of hereditary honours, and because regarding this house (with more truth) as a compelled instrument of the ministerial will, since a minister can make Peers by the oven-fed whenever he feels doubtful of a majority.

It is difficult to decide, exactly, whether the Peerage gains or loses in consideration, by the circumstance of its adding judicial powers to its legislative functions.

This question, with many others relating to the Peerage, is foreign to our subject: it is not precisely of the political man that we are about to speak; it is not only when clothed in his blue coat, embroidered with gold, and seated on his immutable chair, that we desire to exhibit the Peer of France. We mean to describe a singular species, which is dying without the hope of resurrection, because our institutions, our manners, our education, all change—all become modified; and because the fortunate occurrence of a Restoration which revived it once, will most probably return no more. It may not perhaps be amiss to assemble these vanishing features while they are yet before our eyes.

The person we are now to consider is that gentleman of name and bearing whom the Charter of Louis XVIII. attached, by new rights, to the ancient Peerage of his ancestors, and which is traced back to Charlemagne as clearly as that of every good Peer of England must be to King Arthur, or to William the Conqueror, at least: this noble Peer carries, with indifference, a well-sounding name; there is no one in the world to whom he is exactly attached, unless, perhaps, to his stock-broker, whom he sapiently advises, but with whom he is still not too familiar; he has a clear political eye, but his extent of vision is not the less bounded by his personal interest and that of his "order;" he readily perceives that the house is no vantage-ground for a struggle with the Ministry—one gains nothing by that, but an uncertain and according to him useless popularity; he seeks *his* popularity elsewhere, and votes with ministers, or is neutral, but still the friend of ministers, most of whom were the companions of his childhood and his youth, or, at least, are in some way his allies. They, in their turn, affect to anticipate his wishes: they defer to him, they bow to him, and play him off with a thousand cajoleries, all of which he receives with dignity, and with an easy, careless, air, as who should say, "I am he who gives his vote and asks for nothing in return." It happens, nevertheless, very naturally, that his nearest relations have good appointments, his distant cousins are provided for, and the citizen he patronises makes his fortune.

We are all equal in the eye of the law; there is no longer "tithe or serfage," "statute service" or "rights of mortmain," nor do we now acknowledge "fiefs or feudal tenures," nor "high or low jurisdiction:" we have now imposts agreed to by Parliament, and bearing equally on all, in proportion to the fortune of each; the

Peer is a landed proprietor; he is consequently one of the largest tax-payers of his neighbourhood, and makes part of the general council of the department, where he invariably takes the chair; on his estates he is sovereign lord: it is there that he shines; when the district agrees to some assessment, it is he who fixes the amount of the additional pence; should the common weal require a bridge or a new cross-road, he will look to it; is it desirable to carry a railway by such or such a time—it is he who will remove all difficulties; do his neighbours desire a school, a house of refuge, or a lunatic asylum—these are his concerns; he takes charge of them all, he will level whatever obstacle may arise, and, during the session, obtain every assistance from ministers. In fact, though rarely heard to speak in his place, he takes care to be on committees for private bills: the report is favourable, and the House adopts it. It is true that the cross-road borders his property and increases its value, that the bridge leads directly to his gates, and that the schoolmaster is a person whom he protects; but the country, the district, has had nevertheless its views accomplished; he has kept his promise, and it is not his fault if he is a landholder. Then his importance increases, his influence becomes popular, he is no longer called the Earl of this, the Marquis of that, or the Duke of the other, but *the* Earl, *the* Marquis, *the* Duke, and nothing else: every one knows how much that implies, and how vast a difference it makes.

It is thus that, by little and little, the seignorial influence of 1780 is resuscitated; the form is changed, but the fact remains as before; it is like a river turned aside, which gently regains its channel without destroying its banks, and as if it were in in the natural order of things. The elections come round, he is a potency,—a friendly dominion which affords the ministry its powerful assistance. The session begins, and while he goes to take his place in the upper house, his eldest son is sent to the lower one by the free choice of the electors. The Minister of the Interior can do no less than give a sub-prefecture to his second hope; while the third, a lieutenant of cavalry, is suddenly distinguished by the Minister of War, and gallops over the heads of his brother officers to a company.

Any other person would have to intrigue for the gain or preservation of such a position,—would be compelled to solicit all these favours,— this complete establishment of his family; but for him, he gives himself no trouble about the matter: he has a noble name, he is a Peer, he is rich; all things come to him, because all are destined to come. The most distinctive feature of his character is indifference. He is not ambitious. What, indeed, has he to wish for? A prefecture? That would be to sacrifice his repose without increasing his personal importance; he has, besides, attached himself to the reigning family only to secure the fortune of his children, while still carefully guarding his own freedom of action. Were he to accept an appointment, he would compromise a future, uncertain perhaps, but possible: he thus obeys one of the adages, "all is possible." He has all the financial ignorance proper to the true gentleman; a receiver-generalship would not, therefore, suit him: there is the Ministry, but he is too much a man of the world, and too thoroughly averse to labour, to seat himself on that bench of suffering—it demands more determined gladiators. He is highly popular in all social assemblies of his caste, but is little known in the lower house. Without any exact acquirements, neither commerce, manufactures, navigation, nor war, are absolutely unknown to him—he

has heard them all named every day these twenty years; but he is intimately acquainted with nothing; he comprehends neither what constitutes their progress, nor what forms their hindrance; in short, he is no orator; he has a natural antipathy for being on his legs, the very thought strikes him dumb; the sight of a rostrum half strangles him, whether it be of marble or mahogany. However, asking nothing, throwing an eye of disdain or indifference over all, he is dangerous to none, while he is a protector to many, and may be a help-meet for all.

La Bruyère calls the courtier "hard and polished, like the marble of a palace." We do not think hardness a distinctive feature of the personage we are now describing, but assuredly politeness is so. This is one of his most striking peculiarities—one of his attributes. Observe him, how calm and mild his eye!—how benevolent his smile! And his voice! how entirely it sympathizes with your sorrows or your joys. He listens to you; he promises to grant your request; or, if he refuse, it is with regret—with sadness quite affecting; you leave him thoroughly satisfied. Gentle towards his people, he greets the very housemaids kindly, as Louis XIV. did the garden-weeders of Versailles. This mildness of manner is yet susceptible of change; this amenity of character is liable to be disturbed; there is one monster possessed of the fatal privilege of troubling his temper, and souring his blood: it is "Republic!" At the mere name of this *bête noire*, his eyes assume an expression of severity, his brow clouds, the smile vanishes from his lips, and he turns his head aside in dismay. All the slaughters of September rise up to his irritated imagination; the massacre of St. Bartholomew was a trifle compared to the sanguinary pictures that startle him at this ill-omened sound. He has yet to learn how it is, that from 1790 to 1805, "La Belle France" was not buried beneath her own ruins. Then does he rouse up his reminiscences: he carries back his thoughts to the period preceding the Revolution, and so chases the dark spectre; for no man is better acquainted with the gay anecdotes of French history than himself, from the death of the Regent down to the Maupeou Parliament. He could furnish treatises to the memoir-manufacturers themselves: his grandfather witnessed the dawn of the reign of Louis XV.; his father beheld its decline; Madame de Pompadour uttered no word that he could not repeat to you, nor did Madame du Barry commit a folly that he has not shrined in his memory; he knows by heart all the etiquette of the Court, whether the old or the new; and will discourse of the King's hunting parties, from the "booting and saddling" to the garrulous and boastful "return." In his childhood, he once saw St. George; his father was connected with the Viscount de Barras. "Monsieur de Barras,—a gentleman whose nobility was ancient as the rocks of his native Provence, a man of wit and courage, but whose opinions had not been rightly formed." There he pauses, and draws the line. From Barras he makes a spring to Louis XVIII. All the glory of the Empire is indifferent to him,—nay, it is distasteful; it puts all his notions of the noble and gentle to the rout. These important contemporary events, these military distinctions gained by men of the people, give him a fit of ill humour. He would be content to accept the glory of the battles, but they have the great defect of not having been gained by noblemen! It is a weakness that he acknowledges, but from which he cannot free himself. He believes firmly in an "aristocracy of birth"—in the physical distinction of

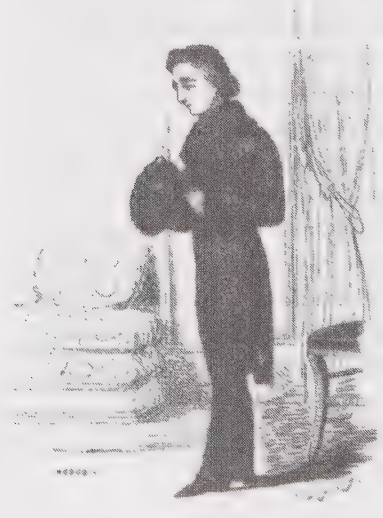
castes. According to him, there is a something of exquisite delicacy that distinguishes the noble from the city-born and the people. It is a peculiar fineness of skin, a sensibility of nerve, a form of feature! He will point out to you the duchess, the lawyer's wife, or the shop-girl, though he see but the hand of each; and this with all the accuracy that may happen. Nor is he without authorities to support this theory. Are there not Byron, Walpole, and D'Aubigné? Admiring Voltaire like the marquises of the eighteenth century, he delights to quote from one of his tragedies the line, "Those whom heaven formed of race so pure;" and the "those" he refers, of course, to himself and to his. He would not change his genealogical tree for an undoubted Raphael! A pleasing narrator, he has gained the reputation of talent in the difficult art of story-telling; but his best anecdotes are those of the reign of Louis XVIII. He was then in his youth, and belonged to the *maison rouge*. Though not exactly a gastronomer, he is acquainted with all the culinary secrets of the Duke d'Escars: and possesses, in the Duke's own handwriting, the recipes for those famous crepinettes and succulent grives-en-caisse, the exquisite taste of which consoled Louis XVIII. for all the annoyance inflicted on him by the Pavillon Marsan.

Two articles of the Charter of 1830 wound him deeply. The twenty-third, which, in its twenty-eighth section, declares the number of Peers unlimited; and in its twenty-ninth, that a Peerage is not hereditary. It is true that the first of these clauses gives Ministers the means of repairing the disadvantages of the second; but in what sort?—Ah! Ehem! Then the twenty-eighth clause—Ah! pernicious twenty-eighth! This attributes to the House judicial powers—decrees that it takes cognizance of high treason and crimes against the state: thus laying on him a burden that his shoulders hate to bear. He is a man of mild and cool character, as we have seen. A criminal trial is to him as a "perturbing influence," whose hostile force troubles the tranquillity of his days, and leaves his nights without repose. The aspect of the accused oppresses him; long debates fatigue him; the gabble of the counsel throws his spirit into inextricable confusion; and, spite of himself, he believes that this prisoner, whose fate he must pronounce, is an honourable citizen, who may probably add every virtue of private life to whatever may be his political errors; who, if he had succeeded in his audacious enterprize, might have given him new masters, and before whom he might himself have then had to give account of his present position. Who knows that he would not find, if he sought well in the folds of his heart, a secret sympathy with some one or other of the obnoxious opinions? Besides, the law threatens the penalty of death! The black balls seem to swim in blood! Were he to plunge his perfumed hand into the urn of votes, he would expect to draw it forth red and spotted! A fever seizes him; his forgotten rheumatism comes back; his grievous and very civil gout pays him a visit:—he is ill! Then the President receives a letter, eloquent in the recital of his sufferings and the expression of his regrets. The *Moniteur* announces that he cannot take part in the duties of the Court. Thus he purchases quiet days and "sleep o' nights," with a few embrocations and cups of camomile. But the decision once given, he becomes rapidly convalescent; and presently after, with untroubled conscience, and a mind at ease, he returns to the House, and to his interrupted "committee on cross-roads."

Without being at all religious, or the least in the world devout, he would yet be in despair if he had not some cousin wearing the mitre—if he could not say, "My uncle Vannes;" or "My nephew Digne." He dreads the office of judge, as we have shown; but is delighted to have a Lord Chief Justice in his family. "It is in good taste: it was thus in the olden time; a great family should ever hold well by the sword, the silk apron, and the long robe!"

This man—of deportment so mild, so elegant, who, like Fontenelle, shuns all agitation, and permits himself to be strongly pre-occupied by *no* event—has yet experienced, he declares, all the violence of the passions. Under the Empire, when our victorious armies were overrunning Europe, he was alternately in Paris or in Italy. Young, rich, and under no control, this was the stormy period of his life. Had not affairs opportunely reached their crisis, had the Emperor not been vanquished, and had Louis XVIII. not returned, his fortune had been irretrievably injured: he was tearing it to ribbons for an opera-girl, and was selling his oaks for an Italian countess. At forty, however, he very luckily discovers that it is good to keep better order. A Peer of France ought not to seek his loves in a foreign land; he cannot, with propriety, be liable to find a rival in some dancer. He takes up, then, with a real affection,—a solid attachment; he becomes a new St. Lambert to a modern Madame d'Houdetot. It is he whom you have remarked every morning on horseback, on the road to St. Cloud, followed by an empty calêche, and a groom bearing an enormous bouquet: he goes to take the Marchioness or the Countess for a drive in the park. He can no longer offer the warm love of youth, but this he replaces by an attachment at once graceful and solid. No one relates the anecdote of the evening, or the news of the day, better than he does. Assiduous without being troublesome, he knows how to say pretty things without falling into commonplace; and, above all, has the merit of arriving and departing at precisely the proper moment.

Always fortunate, always favoured by circumstances, at the end of fifteen years of a constancy proof against all temptation—of a union that nothing has had power to disturb—he finds a strange face one morning in the drawing-room of the lady beloved. It is a personage in a black coat, with a timid air, and quiet abstracted eye.



"Who is this gentleman?" inquires he of the lady of the house.

"Guess."

"But how can I?"

"No, really; but I was forty last month.—You do not guess?"

"Ah! pardon me.—Yes. Your confessor, Madame, without doubt?"

"Exactly."

He is a man of good taste; his life has been passed among diplomatists; he has heard enough; he bids friendship succeed to a love that was already threatening to die. The same attentions, the same assiduities, and the same homage, are continued; but the abbé makes always a third in

their parties, and he prefers that it should be so. This convenient confessor has furnished him with a winding-up that he had long sought in vain,—has helped him to double the rock that was threatening to wreck his dying fidelity. Now that he is getting old, that he is no longer a lover, and that his lady has become devout, he may think more of himself, admit the weakness of his stomach, say his prayers with edifying regularity, and receive frequent visits from his physician.

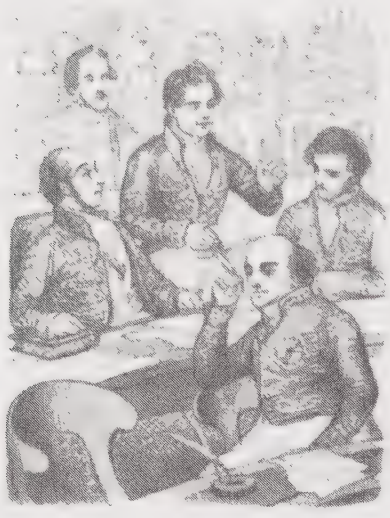
Although simply dressed, his costume is nevertheless marked by good taste; and if he follow fashion, it is still with the tact of a clever old man, who would, above all things, avoid being ridiculous. He was always fond of horses, and of a handsome equipage: thus his carriage is still from the first builder, and his horses are the best that can be supplied by the Parisian Tattersall's stud. He lives in the Faubourg St. Germain; and owns a vast hotel, well stored with historical recollections. It was Vatteau who decorated his drawing-room, Boucher who painted his wife's boudoir; and the furniture, the ornaments, everything about him, is in the Pompadour style, for that was *his* epoch. Take care, you are seated in a chair once occupied by Voltaire! Cagliostro passed two hours in this library! The "Spirit of Laws," magnificently bound, was a present from Montesquieu himself! Here Marmontel has read his "Tales," and Thomas his "Pétréide!" In this dining-room, Monsieur de Maurepas has banqueted! Such is the palace that he leaves every year to pass the summer at his estates, where other recollections await him. He sets off a fortnight before the close of the session, not exactly to see his corn got in, or his vintage gathered, but because June is drawing to an end, and July has never seen him in Paris: he was not there in 1830. Others may vote the budget. He calculates, nevertheless, on dying in his hotel; and the priest to assist him will be that same abbé, the familiar of his lady-friend. Everything surrounding him is linked into perfect order; and he has managed so well that it is this very abbé who confesses his wife, and prepares his younger children for their first communion!



We said at the commencement that the equals of this nobleman are but thinly scattered through the House. It abounds in great landed proprietors who have no seignorial rights, in bankers, in men of learning and of science, and especially in parvenus of all kinds—a very estimable race, without doubt, but one that in changing its condition has not changed its pace. These new men are more highly-informed than their noble brothers, but also much more positive, and infinitely less polite. The Chamber, moreover, presents contrasts of all kinds—of talent, of age, of manners, and of fortune.

Beside the Peer whose emblazoned carriage shakes the pavement of the Rue du Tournon walks his poorer brother, whose limited income enables him only to take, on rainy days, a hackney-coach or his seat in an omnibus. The omnibus from the Odeon has thus frequently conveyed to the Palais Royal the short-hand writers

of the *Moniteur*, the reporters to the *Tribune*, and a noble duke,* who, having begun life like them, died lately, regretted by the upright men of all parties, after having gloriously served the Empire, and saluted anew the tricoloured flag.



Like all deliberative assemblies, the Chamber has its mute members, gods of silence in embroidered coats, Harpocrates in blue, whose opinion is transmitted from their brain to their fingers without the assistance of their tongue; who reserve their eloquence for secret committees, and for private meetings. We do not remember what sage of antiquity pronounced it to be easier to go to Corinth than to face the rostrum. It is remarkable that the admirals who sit in the Upper Chamber speak but little, if at all: the voices that make themselves heard above the storm, that control the movements of fleets of ships, and command the thunders of their broadsides, become powerless when there are no orders to be given, when there is no necessity to use the speaking-trumpet.

The doors are opened, but business has not yet commenced. Here comes Ariste he draws near the secretaries, consults the minutes, reads the order of the day, and takes his seat. He will do no more: he has played his part; he only stays to vote, and because his carriage is not ordered till five o'clock. He is a nonentity; the generation by whom he is surrounded is not his generation; he is one of the quiescent souls that people Elysium, and with calm indifference behold the passions of men.



Do you see Caliste? He is crossing the hall of "Pas Perdus" with an irregular step; he has a bundle of papers beneath his arm; you would fancy him going to a "hearing"—a sitting of the judges; he is himself astonished at not seeing the broad folds of his counsel's gown on his arm; he rubs his forehead, and pulls down his wig, as he did formerly at the Palace of Justice, when some unexpected argument from his opponent had overturned the laboured structure of his plea. He takes his place; he classes his papers; and if it comes to his turn to speak, he mounts the rostrum. "The opposite party," says he: he corrects himself with a smile. "The noble lord preceding me, and to whom I have the honour of replying."—Caliste cannot forget the bar.

The man seated near Caliste is M. Guillaume. His name is that of the creditor of L'Avocat Patelin, so well known to all lovers of the French drama; and, like him, he has sold cloth all his life. He has invented a change in the woof, improved

* The Duc de Bassano.

a shearing-tool, and perfected a carding-machine. He may not have gone the length of imagining a new colour, but he has discovered a thousand new shades—always with the assistance of his dyer. Look at him!—You would suppose him examining the antique cameo that his neighbour wears on his fourth finger. By no means. It is the cloth of the coat that enchains his attention. "You have there," he remarks, "a very fine Cunin-Gridaine."* M. Guillaume sees the prosperity of France in her cloth trade. "Wool! wool!—It is *there* you have the true wealth of a country." He has studied the matter down to the sheep that bears the wool, and to the treatment of the meadow that feeds the sheep!

Do you see, in a corner of the hall, that fat man, who moves with difficulty, but whose complexion is brilliant, and eye still lively?—That is an agriculturist. He has been occupied with agriculture during forty years. He predicts good years or early frosts. If you want a few grains of seed, go to him: he will give you the best. He was never mistaken but once; his knowledge fell prostrate before the giant cabbage; he believed in the giant cabbage! He has, besides, a sort of hesitation in employing the Jauffrey manure.

There are some Peers who vote with ministers, because these last are made for drudging on in the regulation of this world's affairs, while they themselves may thus remain at leasure to follow the course of the stars, resolve mathematical problems, or decompose salts. Observe that old man who stands twisting the grey locks of his wig over his forehead, and is talking with a mild obsequious-looking Peer of sixty. The one is a retired prefect, the other was a great manufacturer of his department; the old man has the hasty tone, the proud look, the imperious air of his earlier day,—he has not lost his manners of the Empire when he was one of Napoleon's viceroys: the manufacturer listens to him, proposes his objections timidly, and ends by becoming of Monsieur the prefect's opinion! The latter forgets that he is speaking to an equal—the former that an ex-prefect issues decrees no more. These two are men of fixed habits.

If, from the public gallery where you are placed, you see the door opened for a man whose plain cravat is admirably tied, whose well-fitted coat is closely buttoned, who wears his sword easily—you will readily guess the profession of this Peer—he is a soldier, a general; he seats himself before that small table on which you see a thick blue pamphlet—it is the war estimates; he chooses his place near a marshal, within reach of an admiral, and beside a former secretary of war. He reads his estimates industriously, and if there arise any discussion "for the better regulation of the breed of horses," he starts like a trooper, who hears the "call to mount." Is the word recruiting pronounced, you shall see him listening with all his ears! He began his career with Dumouriez at Jemappes; he finished it at the feet of the Emperor at Waterloo; he carries his head with an air of pride. The years that have borne down so many stately forms have respected his, or have not had power to bend it. Grave as an ancient statue, he has a disdain for words, and likes the sword better; for him, a whole age elapsed between 1795 and 1815, the great age! from 15 to 40, a hundred other years have dragged themselves slowly by. Now, as to the great age, he was of it, he made a figure in it.

* The present Minister of Commerce is a very eminent cloth-manufacturer.

This man is not proud of his peerage—his pride is in his sword, his cross, his scars of the Empire.

Near him, before, behind, beside him, and like light horse hovering about the flanks of the "serried ranks," do you see the young Peers? One permits the curls of his fair hair to fall floatingly over his youthful brow—another allows his young beard to shadow his cheek, and even to conceal his chin: these gentlemen are the latest products of hereditary succession—the last fruits of a tree now cut up by its roots: they are a political element which will reproduce itself no more. Many sons of generals more valiant, of senators more useful to their country, of ancestors more noble, in short, than were theirs, now have failed to be Peers as they are young people;—confounded with the mass, because their fathers have lived an hour too long.

The young Peer is the hope of rich heiresses and the pride of the Jockey Club; his path is strewn with roses, his hand is on the sceptre of power; a young soldier, he is the colleague of the Secretary of War; an aspirant at diplomacy, it is he whose vote is potent with the President of the Council, it depends but on himself to be the companion of princes; should he belong to the Opposition, then he becomes popular ipso facto; he is a Spartan, a faultless patriot; a generous thought is doubled in value when it proceeds from youthful lips, and more especially if it seem threatening to shackle a commencing fortune.

Do you see that little old man with a white wig on his bald head? He walks with a cautious and somewhat sideling step; observe how the embroidery of his coat is faded! this is the man who, in all France, has most frequently raised his hand for the adoption or rejection of a clause. None has dropped so many balls as he into the ballot box; he has been voting ever since the Assembly of Notables; he is the Nestor of European deliberative bodies, perhaps the oldest "representative" in the world; if he have left his downy arm-chair, if he neglect his rheumatism, if he stiffen himself against the crushing pains of his sciatica, it is because the House is going to vote. He who follows this veteran is still young; his new coat shines with a glittering gold that the atmosphere of the house has not yet tarnished; he is a new Peer: he treads the carpet with a proud step, he passes before the ministerial benches, bowing to their occupants with an air of gratitude: it is to the ministry, in fact, that he owes his new position; an unfortunate candidate for a seat in the lower house, a royal ordinance avenged his defeat—he is a Peer because he could not be a Deputy.

The public in the gallery have often smiled at hearing the orators of the upper house address, each to the other, the most exaggerated epithets. It is always the "noble," the "illustrious," the "learned," or the "very judicious lord preceding." My lords the Peers study the great models, and imitate them. Open Cicero in Catil.: "Si fortissimo viro, M. Marcello dixissem." And just so, "If I were to reply to the illustrious marshal," says the orator of the Peerage. Never does the Roman orator pronounce the name of a consul, without adding to it certain sonorous superlatives: if he address a general, it is "fortissimus vir;" if a civilian, "doctissimus;" in short, if he speak to a mere youth, to one of those young men, in whom, by his own showing, one can but praise the promise,—the hope, he has still the art of giving to this name, as yet unknown, some laudatory qualification. "O adolescens optimus!"

cries he: they do the same in the Chamber, and it is, of course, by no means to gratify aristocratic pride, but merely to imitate Ciceronian eloquence.

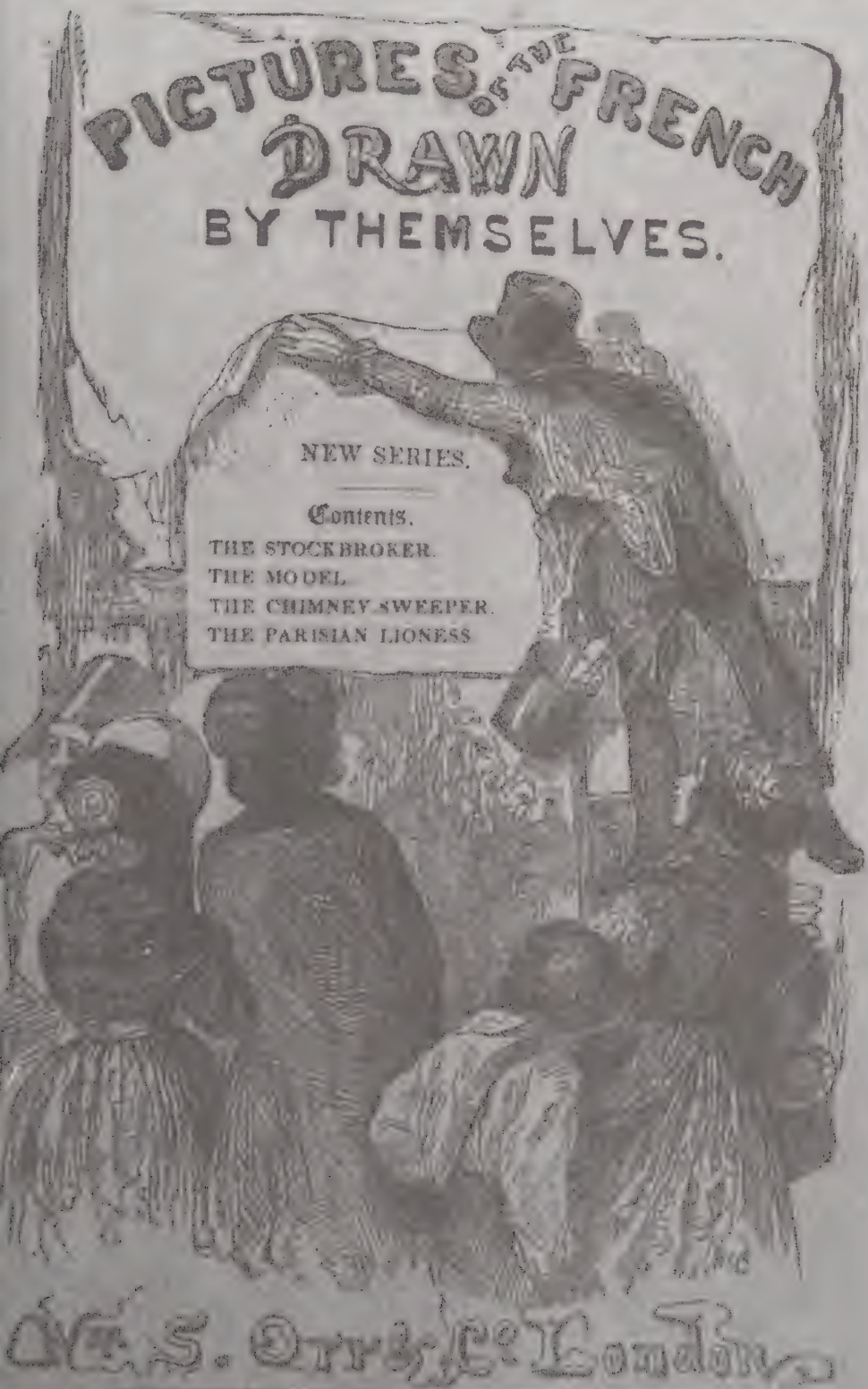
All these men, young or old, magistrates or manufacturers, farmers or prefects of departments, are Peers,—there is no doubt of that. But the figure that presents itself to the imagination, when one thinks of a Peer of France, is that of a man who bears a great name, has estates, and is the owner of magnificent seats; whose family is cited in history, and who, by his age, his fortune, and bygone life, is equally above all present ambition, and all hope of bettering his state for the future.

"There is no superiority but that of merit—no greatness but that of virtue." This maxim of Madame Roland's is often recalled to mind by the various features sketched in this paper. How many thousand leagues are there between Madame Roland and a French Peer!



THE END.

PART 1, *Price One Shilling and Fourpence.*



PICTURES DRAWN
BY THEMSELVES.
NEW SERIES.
THE STOCKBROKER.
THE MODEL.
THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPER
THE PARISIAN LIONESS.





THE STOCKBROKER.

BY FRÉDÉRIC SOULIÉ.



VERILY the Parisian Stockbroker is one of those characters who lay open the present century to a multitude of fine phrases from future moralists, against the barbarism and disorder of the age we live in. Some "Alexis Monteil," or "Dupin," or "Isambert" of the twenty-sixth century, turning over the worm-eaten annals of our courts of justice, and the leaves of some of our books, of which, perchance, a copy or two will still exist in a forgotten corner—will search out our laws, and the state of society flourishing under their regulations.

After having studied the useful trades, and made himself thoroughly acquainted with the respective businesses of our Fruiterers, *Feuilletonistes*, Old Clothesmen, Porkmen, &c., the Dupin of A. D. 2640 will in due course come to the Stockbroker; and having discovered the articles of our Code of Laws*

* The number of Stockbrokers in Paris is limited. They are appointed by Government on the presentation of their predecessors in office. It is enacted by the *Code penal*, that all bets on the public funds shall be punished by a fine not exceeding £400, and an imprisonment not exceeding twelve months.

It is also enacted that Stockbrokers who become Bankrupts shall be liable to imprisonment with hard labour, to be extended in case of fraud to the term of their natural life.

that strictly define his duties and their limits, he will at first fancy that he has found a clue to the knowledge of this public crier of the National Debt.

He will suppose that a few desperate gamesters, having taken to bet on the rise and the fall of the Public Funds, the Stockbrokers, being Government officers, were not allowed to lend their assistance to these speculators; and he will commend the salutary regulations that under severe penalties interdicted Stockbrokers from being agents to any bargain not having for its object an actual purchase or sale. The wish on the part of the Legislature to repress gambling transactions will at the same time account to our future antiquary for the rigour of the enactments that declare all Stockbrokers who fail to be fraudulent bankrupts; it being evident that no Stockbroker who limits his transactions to the prescribed duties of his profession, can possibly fail. The Stockbroker receives money to purchase stock or some other public security, pays for the same with capital entrusted to him for that purpose, transfers his title, and receives his per centage on the amount. Such is his duty, and in the eye of the law he has no other.

However, by dint of researches in our books, and even in the archives of our justiciary courts, the inquisitive Dupin of future ages will discover records of numerous Stockbrokers' bankruptcies; and will find that, notwithstanding the law, they were arranged as easily as those of common tradesmen. This will lead to fresh enquiries, and finally to the discovery of an abuse that will, no doubt, appear enormous: namely, that in the face of the law of France, the Stockbroker's daily practices were nothing less than a perpetual lie given to that law; that the object for which he was appointed was a very subordinate, almost insignificant, branch of his business; and that though he occasionally performed his professional duties, he constantly practised what was expressly forbidden.

The indefatigable ardour of an old book and forgotten archive-hunter in search of some extraordinary conjecture, is almost incredible. Having pushed his enquiries so far, the literary or legal resurrectionist will dive deeply into the annals of the courts and tribunals, in order to discover the suits recorded and sentences pronounced within their walls; perhaps after days and nights spent in laborious research, he will find a little cause in which a Stockbroker was condemned to pay the amount of a wager which his losing customer refused to settle; and this, be it remarked, without the guilty party being otherwise punished by imprisonment, fine, or the forfeiture of his office. Perhaps our Dupin may find a sentence or two of censure pronounced by M. Séguier, First President of the Court of Appeal, against the fatal mania of gambling on the Exchange, and the total disregard paid by the company of Stockbrokers to the laws of their institution. Then strange suppositions will follow. Our learned moralist of 2640, taking in earnest the censure of the Judge, as recorded, will be inclined to regard M. President Séguier as a magistrate of first eminence, one of those

acute and incorruptible judges who sternly set their faces against the venality of their times and the misrule gradually gaining ground in society. M. Séguier will be proclaimed a great man.—Equally right will be the supposition that the formidable company of Stockbrokers could only act with such insulting impunity by bribing magistrates and ministers with heaps of gold; and it will hereafter be held an undoubted truth that this redoubtable association of brigands kept the law captive in their cash-boxes, thanks to the corruption of its administrators.

All this will come to pass exactly as we state; we speak with confidence, having ourselves occasionally superintended and verified the researches of antiquaries, and being well acquainted with their mode of reasoning and deducing facts.

It will not be supposed four centuries hence that all this was so, simply because it happened to be so; but whatever posterity may think, the Stockbroker is not one of those malefactors who exercise a sway over society by the power of their criminal audacity; he is what he is, only because he is not disturbed, and especially because he is the active agent of our ruling passion—love of gambling.

Thus much premised, the Stockbroker is like other men, so far as his moral or immoral attributes are concerned: a good father, he buys a substitute for his son when the latter is ordered for military service; a good husband, he gives his wife a box at the Italian Opera; a good citizen, he is very punctual in the discharge of his duties as staff officer in the National Guard. To these qualities may be added others that place him on a level with the opulent citizens of Paris: as keeping an Opera-dancer, playing deep, pretending to buy only thorough-bred horses, driving a stylish tilbury, and professing the greatest contempt for literary gentlemen. In short, he is a worthy man—neither more wicked, nor worse than the majority of his neighbours.

However the Stockbroker has features in his character quite peculiar to himself, which make him the personage we would attempt to describe.

On entering a drawing-room in which you know there are Stockbrokers, if you should observe a quiet, unobtrusive man who obligingly makes way for you to pass, who quietly takes up his station in a corner, converses in a subdued voice, and listens with evident pleasure to the orchestra or to the singer:—move on, this modest gentleman is not a Stockbroker. If a little farther on you should see a person with an earnest and intelligent countenance speaking with great fluency and gesticulating perhaps with more vehemence than is necessary to convince his auditors, but whose looks and language betray the depth of his convictions:—do not fall into the error of mistaking that eloquent speaker for a Stockbroker. If in a retired corner of the room you should find a gentleman with a slightly contemptuous expression of countenance, in conversation with a group of half-a-dozen plain-looking or middle-aged ladies, besprinkling his discourse with pointed remarks and elegant witticisms, proceed:—he is no Stockbroker. The man who says nothing; the man who politely answers your ques-

tion; he who at play wins without affected indifference, and loses without parade —neither of these is a Stockbroker.

But if, as you are passing from one room to another, you find in your way a stiff, starched man planted like a sign-post, who stops you for ten minutes without deigning to perceive it; if you remark a bold, confident man conversing in a loud voice during the concert, and contemptuously disregarding the diffident "hush!" of the impassioned amateur standing near him; if you notice a man who carries his head proudly, like a Norman charger, a man who in argument pronounces a sentence or two which he seems to consider a final decree; if you see a fat young dandy leaning with his back to the fire-place in the principal drawing-room, addressing in a subdued voice very dull nonsense to the handsomest woman present about her toilette and her bouquet, as if a pearl or a diamond fell from his mouth at every word he uttered; if you take a seat at a card-table where one of the players, whether he loses or wins, ostentatiously rattles his gold; if finally you are pursued by a fashionable middle-aged man who makes a point of appropriating to himself as much room as he can, as many seats, and as much of the air and of the lights, as one person can possibly enjoy:—you have found your man, you have discovered a Stockbroker.

Let us not be misunderstood. The Stockbroker is not a coarse, vulgar fellow, but a man of infinite self-importance, infinitely pleased with himself, infinitely confident of his own intelligence. Whatever may be said of him he has only one cause of uneasiness: he is miserable, because he is a Stockbroker.

The Stockbroker generally is a goodlooking man, under forty years of age; has received a tolerably good education, is neither absolutely ignorant, nor absolutely a fool; is sometimes rich, and must always appear so. He has taken a prominent position in the world, and has, perhaps unconsciously, constituted himself the aristocrat of the day. Now all this is irksome to him; he is still so near his origin, that he feels himself to be a *parvenu*. It seems but yesterday that he was a clerk, earning a hundred and twenty pounds a year in the office of which to-day he is the principal; then he enjoyed a good-humoured laugh at the self-importance of his employer, who had not paid for his office, yet who gave himself the airs of a man of millions; yesterday he danced and enjoyed himself, went to the pit of the Opera, and when he played was sorry if he lost, and delighted if he won; yesterday he had a pretty little mistress who doted on him, and who only desired to be taken on Sundays to the Gaieté and the Ambigu,* where he laughed and wept by turns at the vaudeville and the melodrama; yesterday he was a man, to-day he is a Stockbroker. This terrible title weighs on every hour of his life, and makes his intercourse with society a constant and wearisome piece of acting.

* Two of the minor Paris Theatres.

How should one whose fortune is always at stake, be cheerful and happy? How should the depository of so many fortunes enjoy even occasional gaiety? The speculator who lives by an unintermitting course of active schemes, cannot be possessed of a quiet mind; and when the business of his life is to watch the progress of political events in which his very existence is involved, he cannot find leisure for merry thoughts. Now if, under such circumstances, the Stockbroker were exclusively a man of business, entirely devoted to his counting-house and his ledgers, his position would not be an unnatural one. But since the revolution of 1830, he has set up for a man of the world; to circumstances only he owes this position, but he tenaciously maintains it. When he goes into fashionable circles, he is overwhelmed with the weight of his business, and hence the appearance of a butterfly with leaden wings that seems his characteristic. He would in his person unite all the importance of a capitalist to the careless ease of a man of fashion; he would be as magnificent as a *fermier general*, and yet preserve the grave decorum of a responsible financial agent who calculates all his expenses. He resembles a man walking in one place, tied to a rope made fast in another; he is, to borrow a simile frequently applied to dandies, like an ass in a lion's skin, but the tips of his ears always peep out. In a word, his life gives a perpetual lie to his position; he is a man of business, whose manners, wit, and language are tinctured by his daily avocations, yet he apes the exterior of a man of leisure, whose intelligence and refinement are constantly improving amidst the pursuits of his elegant life.

Hence, some Stockbrokers who might have been distinguished men if they had been without professions, or who might have been pleasant members of society, had they been hosiers or silk-mercers, are clumsy, stiff, awkward, and important, because they contrive to blend the habits of fashionable life with their money-making avocations.

Setting up for one of the kings of fashion, he never loses sight of his assumed character. His apartments are an elegant receptacle for the richest fancy articles, and most costly trifles—they are displayed everywhere, in the antechamber, dining-room, drawing-rooms, and boudoir. The furniture, either antique, of the middle-ages, or of the style of the age of Louis XV., imitated with the utmost nicety, is always new and in the best taste; his tables are strewn with rich albums, and books in elegant bindings; and little groups of statuary and bronzes adorn every room. But the Stockbroker has no real taste for these productions of art—he scarcely knows anything about them, except that he has paid for them, and he enjoys them only for the pleasure of exciting envy among his visitors. His possessions give him no happiness; they are no more than outward indications of his wealth. The Stockbroker's real apartment is an office furnished with numerous drawers, presses, and bill-files, a leathern arm-chair, and a few quires of ruled paper with two columns in red

ink. When he has to write a note on gilt paper, he can no doubt close it with perfumed wax and a seal bearing an English motto; but this is a bore for him; he never writes freely and at his ease except on common post paper with printed forms, and he loves to stamp the seal of his letters with the name of his firm.

His life, his real existence, is in his office and on the Stock Exchange—everywhere else he is uncomfortable; he feels out of place, and is constantly acting a part directly opposed to his tastes.

The Stockbroker's wife alone is at her ease amidst the luxury and elegance that pervade her home. She is only connected with her husband's business by the fortune she brought him, for which he married her, and she has plenty of leisure to be, or rather to become, a fashionable lady; for all Stockbrokers' wives are not born ladies, and many only acquire elegant manners by long and careful practice. We could mention a rich clog-maker's daughter, for instance, who, at the time of her marriage, knew neither how to dress, to walk, to sit, nor to speak; and a country merchant's daughter, whose knowledge only enabled her to tell how many leaves a lettuce ought to yield for a salad, yet who, having married Stockbrokers, have become brilliant leaders of fashion.

But it is a gift quite peculiar to women: they know how to accommodate themselves to the position in which circumstances place them; and a few months generally suffice to make the Stockbroker's wife the leading patroness of the most elegant dress-makers and fashionable milliners. She reclines as gracefully as the most noble marchioness in a corner of her carriage on its way to the Bois de Boulogne, and is not a whit less apt at exchanging an imperceptible sign of recognition with a handsome gentleman on horseback. She will, with a glance, survey from head to foot one of her dear friends, without appearing to notice her, and espy a dozen solecisms in her toilette without even exchanging bows. In the world, she quickly learns what is requisite to constitute a lady of fashion; she is capricious, alive to the least trifles, haughty, patronizing, and impertinent. At home, she knows how to receive and how to welcome; the elegant display so irksome to her husband, seems quite natural to her: she is fond of these costly trifles, and her admiration is free from any vulgar affectation.

Thus the Stockbroker's position as a husband is most critical; for though many persons may be blind to the contradictions of his existence, he cannot conceal them from his wife, especially as he does not consider himself bound to keep up in her presence the farce he plays in public. He pursues his wearisome calculations in the midst of her refined life; he plants his ponderous ledger on the fragile and elegant desk of velvet and ebony where she writes illegible notes, and its weight breaks the pretty bauble; when she dreams of poetry he talks of the funds, and casts aloud while she is practising an Italian aria: in short, he is in her presence a plain man of business, and she is a fashionable lady.

Such a contrast inevitably brings one of two misfortunes. His wife has acuteness enough to perceive that her husband shows himself to her in his true colours, and that it is before the world only that he parades great manners and affects refinement. Then she concludes that their dispositions are quite unsuitable, that affectionate and light-hearted as she is, she will never be understood by her cold and calculating husband; unable to live in such estrangement, she listens to a lover. This, for the Stockbroker, is the most fortunate occurrence.

Or, she believes her husband to be in earnest in his assumed character with the world, and seeing that he does not behave to her as to every one else, she becomes jealous, ill-tempered, and exacting; she looks upon herself as an ill-used, despised, and neglected woman. Quarrels, hysterics, and fits of sullenness ensue; with all the matrimonial miseries to which the condition of a betrayed husband is almost preferable.

In this emergency the Stockbroker, who is fully occupied with the part he has to play in public, considers how he may best pacify his wife, and, like most men in such cases, tries the first means that occur to him. Money seems to him an universal panacea, and on every fresh outbreak of his wife's spleen, he lavishes money for her dress, her carriage, her horses, a country-seat, balls and parties. Thus we see Stockbrokers' wives indulging with tearful eyes extravagant luxuries, and parading at parties their care-worn and miserable countenances. This it is that too often entails bankruptcy on the husband, who after having failed to secure his conjugal happiness, finds himself ruined.

Such is, if we mistake not, the Stockbroker's actual position.

The political influence he possessed a few years ago, which he derived from the Revolution of 1830, is gradually diminishing, and will soon disappear.

The Stockbrokers were indeed the first to pay court to the new dynasty. They were at the beginning welcomed and feasted, and for their loyalty rewarded with colonelships in the National Guard. But around this dynasty, now firmly established, is congregating a more congenial aristocracy which refuses to admit the Stockbroker in its ranks. It is composed of the king's aides-de-camp, the peers of his creation, the rising politicians and legislators of the day, and many adherents of the old dynasty who rally round the throne. A few years more, and the Stockbroker will have returned to the more modest station he occupied ten years ago, which indeed he ought never to have quitted.

This is owing to a circumstance which it may be worth while to explain. The company of Stockbrokers would be a formidable body if they possessed political influence; but fortunately for the state, their professional duties prevent them from taking any direct part in the government. For in a country where public credit is considered of vital importance to the well-being of the state, an association of individuals who, however unable to improve public credit, could at least affect it materially, and cause disastrous panics amongst capitalists, must necessarily be a formidable body. But the Stockbroker, as a political man, is

necessarily siding with the existing government—building his fortune, as he does, on the quicksand of the public funds, which the slightest overflow of revolutionary ideas may undermine and wash away. If the Stockbroker could obtain political influence, it is to be feared that, without regard to his fortune, he would profess opinions of his own, and even aspire to a seat in the cabinet. Now a few resolute Stockbrokers, in the Chamber of Deputies would suffice to peril every day the existence of the French monarchy. This, however, they are unable to do, as *they cannot sit in the Chamber*. Not that they are disqualified by law; no, circumstances alone which might, indeed, oppose the election of many besides Stockbrokers, prevent their sitting as deputies. The Stockbroker must himself transact his business; he must in person attend the Stock Exchange at the precise moment that the legislators are laughing in each other's faces, exchanging jokes, or speaking in earnest. The attorney-general may plead by substitute; in the judge's place may sit a learned brother; and a general may issue his commands through his aide-de-camp; but the Stockbroker must himself sell and buy stock: for this reason he can never sit in the Chamber of Deputies.

Thus inevitably cut off from politics, the Stockbroker's financial importance is also daily diminishing. Under the name of *coulisse*, a piratical money-trade has of late years been established, to the Stockbroker's great prejudice. The *marron* (unsworn broker) is preying on the Stockbroker, without the latter being able to defend himself; for it is possible for him, as we have shown, to act in opposition to the law, although by the law instituted; but it would be difficult for the Stockbroker to require the law to punish parties committing the same offence as himself, and who might at least plead in their defence, that their practices are not so formally forbidden.

However, let what may happen, the Stockbroker will never lose his *importance*.

Perhaps this epithet is not personal enough to express the peculiar *importance* of the Stockbroker. In the age we live in, real importance is attached to all who have and all who are supposed to have money. Thus the banker, the notary, the receiver-general are necessarily important, and owe their importance solely to their profession. Importance always follows money, as naturally as little spaniels follow old women. Nay, it attaches to any profession in which certain members chance to be capitalists. There are important booksellers, (very few, important, meaning rich,) and important ragmen; important patten-makers, and important thieves: but we declare that, though there are vain, conceited, and if you will, insolent authors, we do not know a single important one, in the same sense as the Stockbroker. Authors indeed are endowed with numerous failings, but Providence spared them the ridicule of financial importance. We, the writer of this article, vouch for the truth of what we here advance.





THE MODEL.

BY E. de la BÉDOLLIERRE.



VENTURE with us into one of the crooked and dirty streets, so numerous in the French metropolis; ascend a staircase that may be described as something between a ladder and a climbing mast in a gymnastic ground, and if you wish to restore to life on canvass any celebrated personage of ancient or modern times—whether you want a Spartacus, a Cæsar, a Cicero, a St. Stephen, a Clovis, or a Molière; or whether you stand in need of a feudal baron or a serf, an European or a savage, a martyr or a Jupiter Olympus, a Roman legionary or a French republican soldier:—you will in a wretched garret find the celebrated individual required, the saint, the emperor, the king, the poet, the warrior, or what you will in the person of the MODEL.

"Contemptible profession!" says the misanthrope. Under favour, no, Sir, say we. Does not the "profession" require a combination of physical qualities that nature rarely unites in one individual? Has not the "Model" more substantial claims on our admiration under the *blouse* that hides his Herculean frame, than dwarfish dandies who are principally indebted for their forms to their tailors' skill? Does not the Model make part and parcel of the primitive mat-

ter wrought out by the painter or sculptor? Does he not, especially, co-operate in the creation of the pictures that embellish the walls of our museums, and of the statues that grace our public gardens? "Contemptible profession!" indeed! we cannot grant it. If we were not an author we would be a Model.

Sooth to say, if professions were estimated according to their profits, that of the Model would not rank high. For the sum of three francs per sitting, he assumes any costume, or divests himself of all; holds his head high, or casts down his eyes, looks fierce or gentle, with indefatigable docility.

Formerly, there was a breakfast allowed the Model, over and above the price of his sitting. Seated near the stove by the artist's side, he used to eat and drink at discretion. His appetite was so insatiable, that the practice of giving him a breakfast has been rescinded, as abusive and mischievous.

Previously to this reform, when an artist was prepared to work, when he had donned his blouse, daubed with many colours, and his red cap, and had palette on thumb and pipe in mouth, his Model, after having eaten till he could eat no longer, slowly undressed and began the exercise of his calling.

"Now," said the artist, "let me have a correct attitude: bend your neck, extend your hands, raise your eyes to the ceiling, and remember that you are mortally wounded."

The Model obeyed. But after a few minutes his head sunk on his breast, his body bent, and his eyes involuntarily closed.

"Keep your attitude, man; keep your attitude!" said the artist.

The Model started up, stammered out an apologetical word or two about the difficulty of his digestion, and in a short time substantiated his excuse by again falling into a doze. "Preserve your attitude, and do not fall asleep! There, that's better."

Once more the Model left the required position; the painter grew impatient, swore not a little, and presently threw aside his palette and brushes in despair.

"Indeed," exclaimed the offender, "'tis rather too much to expect one to keep falling mortally wounded during three successive hours."

In order, therefore, to avoid untimely somnolency, the Model is now allowed only his three francs, and has to "find himself." The scantiness of his earnings does not permit him to keep more than one string to his bow. He is reduced to the same expedients as the abbés of the Regency, who used to earn dinners from the church, and suppers from the stage, and he resembles the chandlers of remote country towns, who are at once grocers, tallow-chandlers, barbers, innkeepers, wine-merchants, corn and chaff-dealers, and wooden shoe-factors. He is at all times ready to play the character of "Maître Jacques," in Molière's play.

"Do you want to speak to the Model? Sir, or shall I show you my wares?" — "My business is with the pedlar."—"Here, then" (opening his pack and displaying its contents) "is perfumery of the very best description, Windsor soap, India handkerchiefs, razor-strops, prints after Rembrandt, casts after Clodion. And

here" (this in a mysterious whisper) "are some real Havannah cigars, and Maryland snuff just arrived from Belgium. What will you please to have? I am very accommodating, and if you can spare no money I am willing to take your old boots in exchange."

If you do not want to buy or exchange, he recloses his pack, puts aside the mixture of sawdust and shavings that he is wont to palm off as smuggled tobacco, and returning to his principal business offers his bust or his whole body for a model.

Some Models are shoemakers in their leisure hours; others cut hair; others again quit Paris on Sundays, and repair to village fêtes to juggle as Indians, or devour raw poultry as New Zealanders. There are some who in a tight flesh-coloured dress and duly plumed, thump the parchment of twenty drums and split the ears of their auditory, under pretence of being savages. May civilization deliver us from such barbarians.

Young Models sing, perform in country theatres, boast of being admired by deputies' wives, and are always on the eve of an engagement at the Opera Comique. Bearded Models go on errands, &c., and are frequently old soldiers, who in their cups describe the battle of Champaubert, and cry "*Vive l'Empereur.*"

There are models of all nations, French, Italians, Savoyards, Negroes, and especially Jews. The number of Israelitish Models has of late years greatly increased. Formerly they would only sit for the head; they are, however, no longer so scrupulous. The Jews, who like Gascons, flourish everywhere, threaten to monopolize a profession they once treated with contempt. So much the worse for fine arts! The natural bent of the "peculiar race" is exclusively mercantile; to be a good Model, something else should be kept in view than the paltry remuneration to be earned by varied attitudes; intelligence and feeling are necessary. The model should comprehend the artist's intention, share to a certain extent his inspirations, and play, in turn, each character of the drama he would represent on canvass. Thus he would reproduce the attitude, the countenance, the action of the personage conceived by the painter, and contribute to the perfection of the work by his able assistance; but this is generally above his powers. He lends the artist who employs him merely an exterior form, and appears to think intellectual qualities may be dispensed with. He tries as much as possible to identify himself with a mannikin or a statue; he does not sit *con amore:* his task is irksome to him. He goes through a sitting as a schoolboy toils through his impositions, and has many tricks to beguile the time.

On his arrival, the Model will pull out his watch—(when it happens not to be in pawn) and show the artist during ten minutes that it is exactly eleven o'clock. Trick, No. 1.

He praises at great length the artist's sketch, declares that the picture cannot fail to produce an immense sensation at the exhibition, and predicts to its author the most glorious success. Trick, No. 2.

Then he undresses with as much difficulty and effort as if there were buttons enough on his trousers to suspend them properly. Trick, No. 3.

If he has to assume a sitting posture, he cannot right himself in his chair, and is at great pains to place his cushion in an easy position. If his arm is suspended in the air by a rope, he complains that it is spraining his wrist. If, in order to foreshorten his leg, he has to rest his foot on a block placed for the purpose, he pretends that the contact of his great toe with the rough wood puts him in horrible pain. He disarranges his draperies only for the sake of putting them to rights again; he is too cold or too hot, and continually rises to open or shut the window; he has a cold in his head, and has never done blowing his nose.

Tricks, tricks, tricks.

Bréchon, a Model, who died a few years ago, originated a trick that certainly deserved a patent. He was always very anxious to escape from the irksome task of sitting in the artist's presence; but when, occasionally, the latter happened to be absent from his studio at the appointed time, he undressed at the door and "sat" on the staircase.

"What do I see!" exclaimed an elegantly dressed lady who was quietly ascending, ignorant of the unwonted sight that awaited her.

"Never mind me, Madam; I am Ajax struck by a thunderbolt."

"Oh, shocking!" cried the old maid on the *quatrième*, entering her apartments.

"Why what's the matter with the people? Have I not said that I am sitting for Ajax struck by a thunderbolt?"

"It's abominable!" snarled the old maid. "Do you, forsooth, pretend to mistake our staircase for a swimming-school? I shall call the porter."

The intervention of the all-powerful porter was necessary to make Bréchon dress and leave the place; but he never failed the following day to claim the price of his sitting on the stairs. However improbable this anecdote may appear, it is true; but it ought to be added that Bréchon was at times out of his mind.

The older the model, the more varied are his tricks, which increase in number in proportion to his rheumatic pains; age also makes him loquacious and prodigal of advice. He examines pictures and statues with the eye of a connoisseur, decides on the merit of a sketch, and leans to the authority of the great masters for whom he sat.

"Ah! Sir," he will say, "art has degenerated not a little in my time. You should have seen it under Napoleon! I used to sit to David, to Guérin, and to M. Girodet Trioson; they were famous painters, indeed! how they studied their lines and contours, and calculated their proportions! They never did anything after blocks, or used any of the tricks of the new school, they always painted with a Model before them, whom they copied and studied from morning till night; and hence the superiority of their productions. So great was the demand for Models in those days, that we were unable to satisfy the painters. But all that has passed away, and the profession is going to the devil."

To the pupils competing for the grand prize of Rome, the Model is most addicted to playing the professor. Such is his acuteness that he points out not only the real but the imaginary faults in a drawing. He prevents error by officious advice. The head does not seem to him well set on the body; the arms are too long; the bust wants fulness; the anatomy of the muscles is not correct. He is more classical than an old member of the Institute, more severe than one of the jury of admission, more exacting than the provincial, who on having his portrait taken, found fault with the depth of the shadows, and declared that he never had such a black face.

"Sir, you have given me a large spot under the nose; now I beg leave to observe that I never take snuff."

In the painting-schools the Model is quite a different character. A painting-school, be it known, is a place were aspiring Raffaelles and would-be Pugets are admitted, on consideration of a trifling fee, to draw, paint, and model after nature. The school-room is a large square apartment set round with benches in the form of an amphitheatre; in the centre stands a wooden pedestal painted white, over which hangs a lamp. On this pedestal the Model stations himself, and exposes his muscles to the sight, the study, and the admiration of the assembled pupils.

Every Monday an important question has to be discussed, namely, the position of the Model during the ensuing week, whether the bust shall be prominent, or hidden, whether the legs shall be bent or extended, whether the attitude shall be natural or studied? The debate grows animated, many trials are made; generally the noisiest, sometimes the cleverest, prevail. As soon as the attitude is determined on, the tumult ceases, the pupils take their places, cut their pencils, prepare their colours, and begin to knead their clay, or their wax. Each taking his turn to choose his seat, those who are last on the list resign themselves to copying the back, or the profile of the Model. Silence is restored, soon, however, to be broken by songs carolled in full chorus, and more or less witty sallies, or more or less free jokes. The model has his say; he hazards a pun, perpetrates witticisms worthy of a vaudevillist of the Palais-Royal, and repeats scurrilous jests from the Paris Billingsgate. If cries of "Resume your attitude!" do not interrupt him, he keeps the whole school in a roar; and for this, during the quarter of an hour in each hour allowed him for rest, he receives tokens of the general gratitude in the shape of cyder, beer, and brandy: he will swallow all the provisions. But his thirst is unquenchable; for the Model shares with musicians, firemen, and hackney-coachmen, the privilege of an ever dry throat, and elastic stomach.

The most popular drawing-school in Paris, is that kept by Suisse, situated on the Quai des Orfèvres, near the end of the Pont St. Michel. Suisse, a retired Model, now follows the professions of miniature-painter and drawing-master. His jovial temper delights his pupils. When he perceives a large number of tyros among them, he clothes his bald chin with an immense bushy white beard,

humbly knocks at the schoolroom door, and entering, says, in a cracked voice, "Gentlemen, are you in want of a bearded Model?"

This piece of humour always convulses the pupils with laughter.

It is in the drawing-schools that one may pass in review the few Models, who, o'ertopping their numerous colleagues, have gained a profitable reputation—eminent men—whom no one knows, illustrious persons who live and die in obscurity, and whose names, albeit famous in painters' studios, are completely unknown to the public. There shines foremost the Italian Cadamour, whose card is thus inscribed:—

Cadamour,

King of Models.

and with whom no one is inclined to dispute the honourable sovereignty. He is the veteran of the profession; and though he was only forty-five years old in 1836, the ravages of time obliged him to call himself sixty. His bust and features strongly resemble those of Henry the Fourth of France; and in order to complete the illusion he wears a broad-brimmed flexible beaver hat, "looped-up" over his forehead. Cadamour sits for the head, muscles, veins, and arteries. When M. Gerdy, or any other professor of anatomy, wants a living subject, Cadamour's services are in requisition, and the king of models will tell you afterwards that he acquitted himself in a manner calculated to leave the most vivid impression on the minds of the students. Cadamour will sit till the day of his death, when he will abruptly pass from the pedestal of the school of design to the dissecting table of the school of anatomy—the Père-La-Chaise of the poor—to serve science after death, as he served the arts during his life.

The Model next in rank after Cadamour is Brzozomvsky, commonly called the Pole, his name being unpronounceable by Frenchmen. He is by trade a hair-dresser, and dwells at No. 21, Rue Coquillière, where he deals in pommades, and dispenses invaluable remedies for sore eyes and bunions, which, however, do not prevent his own feet from being deformed by numerous excrescences. Happy Brzozomvsky! He consoles himself for no longer sitting to artists, by shaving their chins! He has grown fat, and lost his graceful figure, but he has still a supple and steady hand to use the razor and comb with equal dexterity. He is no longer Hercules, but Figaro.

As for Dubosc, who has sat since he was five years old, he has lost none of his physical qualities. A perfect model of athletic and graceful form, he contributed to nearly all the mythological groups of the old school, and the bituminous productions of the new. A dutiful son, under the empire he sat as a Cupid to support his aged parents, and thus converted his quiver into a cornucopia. He has, since reaching manhood, saved a fortune of eighteen hundred francs a-year. It is said that he used to place money in the savings-bank long prior to the origin of those philanthropical institutions, that he has never crossed the Pont des Arts to save the toll, that he saves all the five-franc pieces he receives, without ever

changing one, that he never dines when he has no small change, and pays his tailor in copper.

Economy is a virtue so rare among Models that all this is almost incredible. Most of them have no other bankers than the publicans beyond the barriers, to whom every Sunday they regularly carry their week's earnings. One other *model* of frugal industry is, however, also cited, "Céveau, the *beau dentelé*,*" a master sawyer. Céveau is a very powerful square-built man; he can shoulder a smith's anvil and balance a kitchen poker on his little finger, and bets that he will floor a bear provided the animal be muzzled and have mittens on his paws.

Céveau was the favorite of M. Ingres, before the president of the School of Design voluntarily banished himself to Rome.

All painters have their favourite Models, whose form and features they continually reproduce in their pictures. When an artist happens to meet in the street a man with regular and handsome features and an athletic frame, even if he be clothed in rags, he takes him to his studio and soon drills him into whatever attitude he pleases. In a similar way M. Gericault pounced upon the Negro Joseph, among Mme. Saqui's company of actors; Joseph, on arriving in Paris from Marseilles, after a voyage from St. Domingo, had been engaged to play the African Negro. The Melo-drama of "*Naufrage de la Méduse*," brought Joseph crowds of customers, whom his broad shoulders and muscular frame have preserved to him, despite of his natural giddiness. For it must not be imagined that the Haytian, scorched by the ardent sun of the tropics, sits as motionless as Napoleon's statue on the column. No: his countenance expands, his thick lips part, his white teeth sparkle; he speaks to himself, he laughs loud and long; his thoughts wander to his native land; warmed by the heat of the stove, he fancies himself in the Antilles, and the emanations of turpentine and oil-colours bring to his imagination the perfume of orange groves. Oh! illusions!

Shall we speak of the female Model? Jules Janin has poetically narrated the story of one who became a great lady—a female Model whose chaste life proves, like a fairy tale, that sooner or later virtue always receives its reward. Must we oppose the general rule to that charming exception? Shall we introduce our reader to the female Model in her wretched attic, furnished only with a truckle bed, a deal chest of drawers, a broken jug, and a pair of boots? Shall we follow her in her various transformations, now in rags, and now parading her costly and fashionable attire in the Tuilleries gardens, where she might be mistaken for a countess? The subject is full of difficulties. Moreover, how should we be able to recognize her? She always disowns her profession, she exercises it on the sly; she is a dress-maker, a milliner, an embroideress, she waits in a shop, but she never professes to be a Model. When an artist knocks at her door she answers without opening, "You are mistaken, Sir, I am not a Model." The

* Céveau, with the handsome teeth.

next day, however, she always makes her appearance in the artist's studio, and there freely chatters, yawns, sucks lozenges, gives, while sitting, most satisfactory explanations for the equivocation of the day before, and displays treasures that might have been envied by the goddesses of antiquity—gaze coldly on them, young artist; look upon your Model as no more than a lovely statue; do not seek to become the Pygmalion of this fair Galatea, and ponder well the poet's words,

"Quidquid id est, timeo Danaas et dona ferentes."

And you, reader, do not hold the Model in contempt, for that would be to despise strength and physical beauty. Alas! these two precious gifts once so highly esteemed, now only qualify their possessor for an alliance with a widow of a certain age, to become a drum-major, to be clown at the Cirque Olympique,* or an artist's Model. Our leading men are no longer warriors, six feet high, wearing huge falchions by their sides, but little slender whipper-snappers. Intellect has succeeded to bodily strength, mind has overcome matter; Goliath is slain, and king David reigns.

* The "Astleys" of the French capital.





THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPER.

BY ARNOULD FRÉMY.



CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS could not consistently be omitted in this nomenclature of all ancient and modern French types, of all Parisian characters, either indigenous or transplanted. Those urchins with faces begrimed with soot, plump and smoky cheeks, pearly teeth, and lips fresh and rosy as cherries; those little children, half kittens, half pups, half kids, half monkeys, who are always seen frisking, climbing, singing, and capering about—the youngest of all French artizans, the representatives of the only trade of which the humble monopoly can be engrossed by children, exclusively; the little beings whose cry has become one of the proverbial melodies of the hearth, like the cricket's chirp, and the plaintive twitter of the swallow—surely have a rightful claim on us. The Chimney-sweeper's cry is the harbinger of winter, yet it is not unwelcome; on the contrary, we love to hear from our warm and comfortable firesides the honest and cheerful voice of the children whose industry secures to the peaceful citizen and ever-anxious landlord the safety of their hearth, the quiet of their household, and preserves them from that terrible scourge, and most unwelcome and ruinous of all domestic revolutions—fire.

But before we attempt to sketch the Chimney-sweeper's picture, let us distinctly separate him from all his unworthy associates, from those vagabond and pilfering tribes not unfrequently called, by an unwarrantable extension of the title, Chimney-sweepers, or Savoyards; we mean those myriads of unfortunate children who swarm like gnats in the streets of country towns; who gather together about the barriers and outskirts, and at every change of horses beleaguer the doors of stage coaches; the interminable caravansary of hurdy-gurdy players and street singers, exhibitors of dogs, tamed apes, foxes, tortoises, white mice, guinea pigs, weasels, and marmots: all these have nothing, or at least very little, in common with the Chimney-sweeper, properly so called, and may be said to represent only the drones of the industrious colony of Chimney-sweepers. By their begging tricks and habits of lazy vagabondage, they belong of right to the numerous class of Parisian mendicants, whose cunning and ingenious manœuvres will obtain a special mention in this gallery.

The Chimney-sweeper's hard lot has been much deplored; the sensibility of romance writers, water colour painters, manufacturers of elegies and *operas comiques* has, however, mostly been lavished on those Chimney-sweepers who do not sweep. Too much pity has, indeed, been wasted on the small fry of beggars of farthings, halfpence, and crusts of bread, those minute vagabonds who spend the day warming themselves in the sun, or apostrophizing passengers in the street, whom they indiscriminately style "Lieutenant," or "General;" and we think too little has been said of the real Chimney-sweeper, the true *climbing boy* of eight or ten years old, who commences his perilous ascents before his little heart has yet surmounted its childish terror of darkness, and at an hour when his eyes are not always wide open. "Come, don't be down-hearted, my little man; fancy that you are climbing the fairest hill in Savoy or Piedmont." The poor child must resign himself to become, during an hour or two, dumb, blind, and half choked and deafened by soot; he must entomb himself alive in a kind of sepulchre; he must climb, scratch, cling, and hoist himself up, until his comrade on the roof perceives the tip of his little soot-begrimed nose over the ridge of the chimney-pot. He can go no higher; and after effecting his descent, he is hardly allowed time to recover his breath, sneeze, and shake himself like a spaniel coming out of the water, before he is made to repeat the manœuvre in a neighbouring chimney. These ascents in darkness are not always unattended with danger, for there are in Paris many modern chimneys so constructed as scarcely to afford passage for the smoke, to the great annoyance of tenants. Less obstinate than smoke, the Chimney-sweeper introduces himself through the narrowest apertures. Now and then, indeed, he sticks by the way, caught as it were, like a fox in a trap; when he cries aloud, "Help, help!" and often, the only means to effect his liberation is to break a hole through the brickwork. It sometimes happens, we are sorry to say, that the poor boy has no

time to raise his voice; his breast is oppressed, his young and delicate lungs are denied a necessary supply of fresh air, his strength gives way, and he dies of asphyxia. Children should die in their mothers' arms; the poor little Chimney-sweeper dies alone, in darkness, without one last ray of light from the glorious sun. Behold him. His woollen cap is turned over his shoulder; he is like a bird found dead in its nest; his hand is clenched and clammy; his little mouth is open, but never more will it give utterance to his joyous national song. Painters of scraps in water colours, make ready your palettes! here is a touching subject for a sketch, which true to nature, is too sadly characteristic of the Chimney-sweeeper's destiny.

We have repeatedly had opportunities of observing, that bestowing an undue share of compassion on, or injudiciously pitying, any particular calling, seldom fails to operate to its prejudice, and in the end to alienate public charity. That the Chimney-sweeper's lot is a hard and painful one, and requires perseverance, and even a degree of courage, we should be the last to deny. But, on the other hand, it is not wholly destitute of advantages. In the first place, it is lucrative; for a child of twelve years old earns, by sweeping chimneys, forty sous a-day, almost a man's wages; and in the mean time, the boy is serving an apprenticeship to a good trade, by which he may one day grow rich, and himself employ men and boys in his turn

Neither Paris nor the departements produce climbing boys. In Paris, the mechanic or petty shopkeeper burthened with a numerous family, and necessitated to find early employment for his children, makes choice for them of professions more flattering to his vanity. He apprentices one son to a grocer, another to a hair-dresser, a third, he makes a chorister boy, a fourth, he enlists for an *enfant de troupe*, or even engages in a company of children playing at a minor theatre; but he is above bringing up one of his family to be a Sweep. He leaves that to mountaineers' sons. "Let *them*" says he, bridling up, "smoke-dry their offspring, and disfigure their own image under a vile coat of soot and ashes." He prefers to see his sons up to their eyes in flour at his neighbour's the baker's or smothered in oil and sulphur at the oilman's round the corner, even at the expense of a heavy premium.

The peasants of Savoy and Piedmont are less scrupulous than the petty citizens of Paris; and the Piedmontese, who alone furnish more climbing boys than all France, albeit they are there accused of endemic supineness and inactivity, unite, on the contrary, to the industry and capability of bearing fatigue peculiar to mountaineers, the adroit subtlety of the Italian character. With his broken French, his supple gait, his lazy and furtive looks, the Piedmontese has gradually monopolized in France the exercise of a most lucrative trade, namely, that of master Chimney-sweeper.

Observe the signboards of the numerous stove warehouses in Paris, where the copper shines with the lustre of a reflector, and the visitor beholds on all sides

pyramidal piles of stoves of every description. The names of the proprietors of these dazzling repositories invariably end with *i* or *o*, like the artistes at the Italian theatre. Piedmont supplies France with almost all her stove makers, as well as climbing boys; for indeed every intelligent and persevering Piedmontese Chimney-sweeper, sooner or later, opens a stove warehouse in Paris. Thoroughly to understand his business, the stovemaker should have that practical knowledge of the construction of chimneys, which can only be acquired by climbing and sweeping. The Sweep carries his future licence in his soot-bag with much more certainty than the young soldier carries the Marshall of France's staff in his knapsack.

Even French stovemakers prefer to employ Piedmontese boys, whom they well know to be more robust, active, and intelligent than those of other countries: they nearly all keep the lads on the footing of apprentices, board, lodge, and clothe them, and eventually make them journeymen Chimney-sweepers.

The Piedmontese sweeps, tractable and obedient enough on every other point, inherit an overweening national pride, and unite in their exile to form a closely allied society, a kind of patriotic oligarchy. Born in the midst of the sublime horrors of the Simplon, cradled in the grandest rocky scenery in the world, among pines, larches, granite caverns, foaming torrents, and silvery cascades, most of the Piedmontese climbing boys are brought up in a pretty little town called Domo D'Ossola, which alone supplies France with Chimney-sweepers, as Bergamo supplies tenors, and Bologna, sausages, to all Europe. Leaving Domo D'Ossola, the Piedmontese passes through Villa, a lovely village, and journeys across smiling vineyards, and verdant meadows perpetually damp like the feet of water-nymphs, till he comes to the great lake, and crossing it, reaches the good city of Milan. Here he makes his debut, in the capacious chimneys of the vast Italian pallazzi, with a view to preparing himself for the narrow, sloping, and almost inaccessible chimneys of the French capital.

Paris is the place where all arts, trades, and professions concentrate, where every new idea is wrought out, and to Paris, the young Piedmontese directs his steps. His career is traced out for him in the workshops of the master Sweeps about the barriers, where he meets a numerous colony of his countrymen, and soon grows accustomed to the French language, as spoken with an admixture of the terminations of his native idiom; in the upper journeymen, he finds guides and instructors, and kind friends who lighten his task and smooth the first difficulties of his apprenticeship. Thus assisted by his countrymen, the Piedmontese has chances of advancement and success that climbing boys from other countries would in vain look for. They may, indeed, be considered the spoiled children of the profession. It is also worthy of remark, that they acquire the French language with extraordinary rapidity; three months are generally enough for them to make themselves very intelligible; and their natural aptitude, in con-

junction with the interest of their compatriots, accounts for the preference given them by most master sweeps.

But it is time we should turn from the Piedmontese, and say something about the more popular, and let us add, the less useful Chimney-sweeper, namely, the Savoyard.

More than once, a just outcry has been raised against the cruel destiny of those unfortunate children who flock in thousands to Paris, about the beginning of the year, just at the time when swallows leave it. They are almost all marshalled under the direction of masters, who mercilessly farm them out, crowd them at night in miserable dens, compel them to beg when no work can be procured, ill treat and half starve them, and in short, completely sacrifice them to a kind of traffic more infamous than the slave trade, inasmuch as helpless children are made its victims in the heart of a civilized country.



The masters of the young Savoyards are mostly travelling tinkers, or dealers in rabbit skins, sad reprobates nearly all, or at best cruel wretches, who consider the Sweepers they enlist in their services as so much marketable property, which it is their business to turn to the best possible account. They make every boy hand over to them his earnings, without deducting a single farthing, on pain of a merciless flogging, and allow him only about six sols a day. This circumstance, alone, sufficiently explains the superiority of the Piedmontese over the Savoyards; the latter scarcely ever tasting meat or soup, and living on potatoes and decayed fruit. Hence their bodies are thin, rickety, and incapable of bearing fatigue; their limbs lack strength, and their hearts courage.

The inhumanity of the Savoyards' taskmasters have more than once provoked, the just animadversions of philanthropists, and even of economists; but no one has dreamed that the complaints should be addressed to Savoy, rather than to France. In fact the way to set about ameliorating the climbing boys' condition would be to prevent their fathers and mothers from selling or hiring their children for one, two, or three years, like beasts of burden. But how to enrich penurious Savoy? how render her soil less hard and sterile, and thus redeem her sons from the cruel necessity of emigrating for want of food? how bless her like other countries, with abundant harvests, fine large rivers, smiling vineyards, commerce and manufactures? If this could be done, we should no longer hear of Savoy trusting her lambs to faithless shepherds who shear and sell their fleece before it has had time to grow. Change the Savoyard's disposition, endow him with more active blood, more life, more natural wit; eradicate from his mind its strong natural tendency to laziness and lying, for too true it is that there is a spice of begging inclination in every Savoyard Chimney-sweeper, that he whines and asks alms as much from habit as want, which propensity is fostered in him by his master's treatment. Let it not be forgotten that the Savoyard is poor and miserable when he enters France, and that his servitude is a Savoyard, not a French, speculation; for this reason, no asylum for Savoyard climbing boys has yet been established; the humanity of such an institution no one questions, but would it be in conformity with the laws of national economy? When our orphan asylums and workhouses are crowded with French children, no one can propose new institutions for Savoyard and Italian boys; and their misfortunes are only alleviated by the benovolent acts of charitable individuals.

When violets begin to blow and butterflies to appear in gardens, many Chimney-sweepers, now that their occupation's gone and there are no more chimneys to sweep, return to their own country, escorted by their masters. Those who remain in Paris, are destitute of any means of existence; and hence the myriads of beggars and vagabonds that throng the streets.

We would fain have it in our power to describe, laying the scene in one of the towns or villages that surround Salanches—for thence nearly all the Savoyards come—some fête, or religious festival, or rustic dance to the primitive music of a triangle and bagpipe, to celebrate the annual emigration of the Spring and Aurora of Savoy, represented by the youthful exiles; and as they depart on their way, a national song extolling their native skies and mountains, like a Ranz des Vaches, would thus conclude: "Adieu dear children; grow rich, wise, and tall, and return soon to your mothers and sisters." Then we would represent the mothers' bitter grief at parting with their youngest born, the lowing of the cows for the loss of their young herdsmen, the bleated adieux of the sheep to their shepherds. People believe that when the young Savoyards leave their country, the village curate, a rustic St. Vincent de Paul, or companion to Rousseau's Savoyard vicar, addresses from his pulpit an exhortation to his

youthful flock relative to the snares of Paris, the duties that there await them, and their future conduct. We heartily wish all this were true, for the sake of our subject. But we have to give a faithful picture, and not to write a pastoral; and it is our painful duty to say of the village fêtes and Savoyard dances, the parting visits to churchyards, and fathers' graves, and mountain echoes, and even of the curate's sermon, that if such usages ever existed, they have at the present day fallen into desuetude, or rather into the region of romance, with most of the provincial customs of France. The Savoyard Chimney-sweepers now in Paris declare that they started from their native country mute as marmots—most of them very glad to make their escape, and consequently no less happy at the prospect of never returning.

In describing the Chimney-sweeper's appearance, likewise, we must adhere to truth, and eschew flattery; it is all very well to say that painters should always make their portraits a little handsomer than nature, but the rule is doubtless not meant to apply to Chimney-sweepers.

The climbing boy is rather ugly than handsome, in the first place, because the Savoyard, Piedmontese, or Auvergnat features are very far from the Greek or Roman standard, and secondly, with his face always begrimed with soot, and a woollen cap slouched over his ears, he is never seen except under great disadvantages.

Let us add, that when the climbing boy is really pretty, no other child is half so charming to behold; nothing can become him better than his clumsy wooden shoes, his brown cap, aud his baize coat that allows full play for all his limbs. His smile and attempt at a bow are irresistibly pleasing; he may be compared to a spaniel puppy a fortnight old beginning his gambols, or more appropriately to an antique little winged cupid of Saxony porcelaine, muffled in an ample body coat and bob-wig. If Boucher or Vanloo had painted Venus ordering Eneas's armour of Vulcan, no doubt he would have grouped round the divine anvil a dozen cupids armed with bellows and disguised as Chimney-sweepers.

Most trades in Paris have their patron saint, and regularly celebrate the annual return of his festival; fruiterers, gardeners, shoemakers, and laundresses have their fête day, and why should not Chimney-sweepers? They work hard, and surely it is but reasonable that the poor climbing boys should have in the year *one* day of relaxation and pleasure. On that grand day they should be thoroughly washed, overnight, if necessary; and dressed in white, with nosegays in their breasts, mixed with ribbons. They should dine and be feasted like kings, and enjoy the luxury of plate, in which they might this once admire their clean faces; and after dinner they should be allowed to dance as they dance, or rather as they danced, in their native country. Of this fête they would speak all the year round, night and morning; they would sweep all the better for it, and the remembrance of that day would cheer them even in the chimney.

But whither are we wandering? Here are we singing the Chimney-sweeper's joy at his fête, without reflecting that we may soon have to mourn his loss. Yes, the progress of machinery, which levels and simplifies everything, will soon suppress the Chimney-sweeper, as it has suppressed so many other living machines: the journeyman baker, the journeyman printer, the journeyman chocolate-maker, the cotton-spinner, the waggoner, the groom, the horse-dealer, the coachman to wit. Sooner or later steam will supersede the climbing boy; and how should it be otherwise? Are not steam and smoke twin-sisters? We shall live to see "self-sweeping" chimneys in use.







THE PARISIAN LIONESS.

BY EUGENE GUINOT.



MADEMOISELLE de VERNEUIL had completed her eighteenth year, and it was already two years since her first appearance in the world, when one day her father thus addressed her:—

"My dear Alix, it is time you thought of marrying; I have spared nothing for your education; you have had the best masters in Paris, and for two years I have taken you into society where I had rarely gone since your mother's death. I have fulfilled all the duties of a good father, and I wish now to establish you suitably. You are pretty, you have talents, your marriage portion will be twelve thousand pounds, and I shall leave you twice as much (as late as I can, certainly); but still as my only child you will have all my fortune. With these advantages you have only to choose. I do not wish to influence either your taste or your inclination; in a few days we will resume the subject, and I shall then ask you if you have made your selection."

Alix, whose disposition was frank, open, and decided, replied at once, "Why delay what can be said now? I have already been thinking of M. Armand Dureynel."

"Very well! your choice pleases me. M. Armand Dureynel is, I believe, in all respects quite eligible; he is well-born, amiable, and rich; his father is my friend; he won twenty pounds of me at écarté last night. I will go and see him to-day, and the affair doubtless will be arranged without any difficulty."

A month afterwards the marriage took place. The day of the wedding the newly-married couple started for Switzerland, without even announcing their intention to their relatives; this sort of legal elopement was then a fashion recently borrowed from England. M. Armand Dureynel, who prided himself upon following the laws of good society, would rather have renounced the half of his wife's fortune than this sentimental journey, which was to give to their honeymoon a reflection of elegance and refinement. Alix did not make the least objection. She had just been told that a wife should follow her husband, she had vowed to submit to the commandments of the matrimonial charter, and it was not on the first day that she would infringe the duty of obedience. They set off cheerfully in a travelling carriage; and this journey was for Alix a twofold initiation: she entered at once and at full gallop into conjugal and fashionable life.

Ten years have passed since then. Placed by her marriage in a brilliant station, Madame Dureynel was soon remarked amongst the divinities of Parisian fashion, and now she is foremost in the *élite* of the *merveilleuses*, those indefatigable amazons who are to be seen in all elegant reunions—who, disdaining the suitable recreations of their sex, abdicate the soft empire of modest grace to follow our dandies to the race, and meddle with the great and little manœuvres of the Jockey Club; queens of the race-course who have been surnamed *Lionesses* from their extraordinary strength and intrepidity, and from the arduous toil of their every day life.

There are some women who claim all the rights and privileges that the laws and custom have reserved exclusively for man. They would be admitted to all places in the government, to power in all its degrees, and to superintend the working of the social system in all its functions. The Lioness is less ambitious; she confines her emancipation in narrower limits, and leaving to the stronger sex the weight of affairs, and the exercise of an acknowledged authority, she only asks, or rather takes the liberty of sharing the pleasures, habits, manners, independence, whims, absurdities, and elegancies of the male exquisite. It is only in the habits of fashionable life that she must have unlimited freedom; for everything else she condescends to adhere strictly to the feelings and duties of a woman.

But if you wish to be thoroughly acquainted with the Parisian Lioness, we must pass a day with Madame Dureynel, to study all the shades of her character, all the details of her public and private existence.

Let us enter her newly-built house at the extremity of the Chaussée d'Antin. What a charming habitation! The elegant entrance, the noble portico, the fragrant flowers, the brilliant exotics, the graceful statues, all claim our admira-

tion; few Lionesses no doubt have so fine a cage. But we must not loiter here, it is already eight o'clock, and the Lioness is an early riser. Madame Dureynel is just awake; she rings for her maid who assists her in her first toilette for the morning. These cares only occupy a quarter of an hour, when the Lioness dismisses her maid, saying,—

"Send Job here."

The apartments of Madame Dureynel merit the honour of a description; they are composed of four rooms decorated in the style of the middle ages. The bedroom is hung with blue damask, and furnished with a canopied bed; a *prie-Dieu*, six arm-chairs, and two magnificent cabinets, all in ebony beautifully sculptured; Venice glasses, gilt lustres and candelabra, vases and cups of silver exquisitely chased; two pictures, a "Judith" by Paul Veronese, and a "Diana hunting," by Andrea del Sarto, complete the furniture of this room. The drawing-room is overloaded with ornaments, furniture, pictures, and nick-knackeries of all sorts, which give it the appearance of a rich curiosity-shop; and particularly remarkable amongst this heap of miscellaneous objects are the arms which garnish the walls. There are lances, swords, poignards, gauntlets, helmets, axes, coats-of-mail, in fact a complete equipment for ten knights. The boudoir and the bath-room have the same gothic appearance, severe and martial. Nothing is more strange than to see the elegant trifles belonging to a woman's attire, thrown in the midst of this warlike insignia, and formidable relics of the olden time:—a lace scarf suspended to an iron spear;—a pink satin hat on the pommel of a rapier;—a parasol thrown on a shield;—a tiny slipper crushed beneath the ponderous cuirass of a captain of Lansquenets.

The Lioness in her morning costume might easily be taken for a nice-looking young man of seventeen, rather than a woman of eight-and-twenty. She wears a dressing-gown of green cachmere, lined with red silk, very ample in its folds, and falling to her feet, which are hidden in large turkish slippers. A foulard cravat encircles her throat, and her head is covered with a black velvet cap, from which is suffered to escape on each side a single lock of hair. Thus attired, she goes into her boudoir, where her first occupation is the perusal of the newspapers; not those light and frivolous journals consecrated to fashion, literature, and the theatres, but the *Journal des Haras*, the *Journal des Chasseurs*, and two or three political newspapers. She reads them from beginning to end that she may be aware of all that is going on.

Madame Dureynel is interrupted in her pleasant occupation by Job, who presents himself according to her orders. Job is the groom of the Lioness.

"How is Pembroke this morning? I intend to mount him to day, get him ready; you will follow on Fenella. Here is a letter and a rouleau of twenty-five louis that you must take to M. Arthur de Sareuil. You are to deliver it to himself, you understand, Job."

"Must I bring a receipt?"

"What nonsense! You are then to go to my hatter's, and say that I must absolutely have my brown beaver hat by twelve o'clock. Make haste."

"Has Madame any other orders to give? Will Madame see any one this morning?"

"Has anybody called already?"

"The saddler waits Madame's pleasure to see him."

"For his account, I suppose. Those tradesmen are all alike, always in a hurry for their money. After him there will be the others. You will tell Joseph that I will not see any one on business this morning; I expect company to breakfast, and cannot be disturbed."

Job retires, and the Lioness left alone is absorbed for a few moments by serious reflections on the expediency of getting rid of her creditors; she regrets the good old times for persons of condition, when, if their tradespeople permitted themselves to be troublesome, they were thrust from the door, or haply thrown from the window; but as in these degenerate days to pay is the only way not to be importuned, and as people must pay after all, she thinks it better to begin at once. "Let me see, says she; "what I owe to Crémieux, to Verdier, to my milliner, my tailor, my saddler, my linendraper, amounts to 20,000 francs. I calculated on the races helping me to settle these arrears, but on the contrary I have been sadly unlucky in all my bets; now I have only two ways to act: either to retrench my expenses and become economical—and that will be very long and very difficult—or to sell out a certain quantity of stock, which will be more sure and expeditious."

The clock is striking ten as Madame Dureynel arrives at this satisfactory conclusion, and Joseph the footman announces that her fencing-master is there, and asks if she will take a lesson this morning.

Fencing has been recommended to Madame Dureynel by her medical attendant, an excellent doctor for Lionesses, skilful in advising only what he knows will please, and regulating his prescriptions by the tastes, habits, and passions of his patients, a medical system which has great success in the fashionable world. Lionesses delight in all masculine exercises; moreover, fencing is a pastime salutary for health and favorable to the developement of grace and beauty.

"No," replies Madame Dureynel, "I shall not take a lesson to day, particularly as here come my guests. Bring breakfast."

Madame Dureynel's guests are two Lionesses, Madame de Tressy, and Madame Primeville, her most intimate friends, or rather as she calls them her dearest comrades. As she shakes hands cordially with them,—

"I told you," says she, "it was to be without ceremony, quite a bachelor's breakfast, nothing more:—oysters, a pâté-de-foie-gras, and a few other trifles; by the bye, I hope they have not forgotten to ice the Champagne.

They sit down to table, a large breach is made in the pâté; the *trifles* present

themselves under the substantial form of a truffled poulade, and several other dishes of the same importance. The three Lionesses partake of everything in a manner to sustain the honour of their name, that is to say with an appetite truly leonine. While doing justice to the repast, they gossip freely, and sometimes they all talk together like other women, for Lionesses do not renounce all the privileges and fascinating weaknesses of their sex.

Whatever may be done to counteract the natural disposition, it takes refuge somewhere, and inevitably shows itself. Metamorphosed as she is by the eccentric part she plays, the Lioness remains still a woman by the profusion of her words.

Between the three friends the conversation turns of course to fashionable topics, and scandal is not more excluded than amongst devotees and blue-stockings.

"Is there anything new," asks Madame Dureynel. "Very little, truly, but yet we are not quite in the dead season for scandal!" "Have you read Balzac's last novel?" "I never read novels." "Nor I." "Nor I." "So the Viscount de L—— has sold his grey horse?" "No, he lost it at bouillotte, and it is the luckiest thing that ever happened to him." "What! to lose a horse which cost him 10,000 francs, call you that good luck?" "Ten thousand, you think: it cost him more than a hundred thousand, and that is why he gains by his loss. M. de L—— had such an excessively good opinion of his horse's qualities, that he accepted and proposed constantly enormous bets upon him; the horse was always beaten, but these defeats did not alter in the least the opinion that the Viscount had conceived of the unfortunate animal, so that this obstinacy cost him in less than a year four or five thousand louis." "I did not think him rich enough to sustain so much bad luck." "Did you hear Mario last Monday? he sang like an angel." "And what think you of the new ballet?" "It would be perfect if there were any male dancers, for they are indispensable to a fine ballet, notwithstanding our friends of the Jockey Club would only see women at the Opera." "Has Madame B—— reappeared in the world?" "No, she is still inconsolable; she regrets the time when like the Duchesse de la Vallière deserted ladies could shut themselves up at the Carmelites. But we have no longer any convents for this purpose, and it is unfortunate; for nothing can be more tiresome than a grief that must be kept at home." "Why does she not imitate Madame D'A—— who never mourns a desertion more than three days." "Consolation is easy for oft recurring misfortunes." "Apropos of Madame D'A——, they say that little Roland is entirely ruined." "What will become of him?" "Will he turn horse-dealer?" "No, he is going to undertake a scientific voyage to California; he has an uncle Academician who has promised to get him received *savant*, and to have him elected member of the Institute." "It is a great pity, he rode a capital steeple-chase." "Had he not a horse killed under him?" "Yes, *Mustapha*, belonging to Capt. Kernok, which was struck with apoplexy, crossing the Bièvre in a steeple-chase." "A legal action arose

out of this occurrence, the Captain wished to withdraw his stakes, and all the betters upon *Mustapha* maintained that the bets ought to be cancelled." "That appears to me just, apoplexy is certainly a weighty impediment." "However, the judges decided differently." "Are you quite sure, my dear Primeville?" "I have some reason to remember it; I lost fifty louis in the business. I had bet upon *Mustapha* against *Miss Annette*." "At equal stakes?" "No, one to three." "Yes, that was about the proportion." "You are not always so unfortunate. How much did you win at Chantilly?" "Three hundred louis. Alfred arranged my bets; he understands it!" "He is the best speculator on the turf." "And you, Dureynel, what luck have you had lately?" "Very bad, I kept an account of my losses, but they became so large, that I destroyed it. Yesterday again, at the Porte Maillot meeting, I lost five and twenty louis to M. de Sareuil; and have just sent them to him. If this continue I must leave off betting. Last week I was obliged to borrow a thousand crowns of Armand." "Your husband, how is he? Shall we see him to day?" "I know not; it is four and twenty hours since we met, and I did not go to his apartment this morning by discretion. Armand is my best friend, a charming person whom I love with all my soul, and whom I would not vex for the world; but I am his wife, and in this character there are things I must not know officially." "You are right; conjugal friendship has its scruples, and you understand them admirably." "Yes, my dear creature; your sentiments are irreproachable, and your breakfasts are like your sentiments. What shall we do now?" "If you like, we will go to the pigeon match, at Tivoli, and then to the Bois de Boulogne; there is a private match to come off to-day, between *Mariette* and *Leporello*." "Yes, our horses are waiting for us at the entrance of Auteuil; we can drive there in your carriage."

It is one o'clock, the Lionesses drive to Tivoli. All the noted fashionables are assembled in the shooting gallery; the best shot amongst them brings down twenty-five in thirty. Considerable bets are made. Madame Dureynel, whose skill is well known, takes a prominent part in the exercise; she seizes the gun with a steady hand, adjusts it with the greatest ease, fires, and the pigeon falls: the spectators applaud, and the Lioness is prouder of this prowess than she would be of the most brilliant conquest. The carriage is then ordered to Auteuil. Soon after the three friends mount their horses and gallop to the race-course. The Lionesses and sporting men shake hands cordially *à l'Anglaise*.

"Will you take your revenge?" asks M. de Sareuil of Madam Dureynel.

"Willingly. On which do you bet?"

"On *Mariette*, Thirty louis against twenty-five."

"How kind of you! But let us exchange. You take *Leporello* at twenty-five, and I *Mariette* at thirty. If you are bent on *Mariette*, put forty louis against my twenty-five. I have just seen the bets, and they are made upon this footing."

"Not all; there are some even doing at par; but however to give you handsomely your revenge, let it be forty."

The signal is given, the two horses start, *Leporello* arrives first at the stand: but a difficulty arises from an accident of the race. The betters on each side warmly sustain their interests. M. de Sareuil is far from conciliatory in the discussion, and Madame Dureynel defends herself like a Lioness; hasty words are exchanged, and until the judgment is pronounced, the gentlemen will not yield to the ladies; for this is a question of money, and not of compliments. If some exquisite of the olden times, ignorant of the manners of our modern fashionables, could overhear these singular discussions, he would exclaim, "The days of chivalry are indeed flown, and the charming reserve of the fair sex, what has become of it?"

However the judges decide against *Leporello*, and Madame Dureynel retires in a passion, and swearing at the judges in cavalier style. The three Lionesses have determined to spend the day together, and coming from the Bois de Boulogne, they agree to proceed to the swimming school.

After the bath, Madame Dureynel and her friends go to dinner, and then proceed in brilliant and eccentric toilettes to the Opera. The particular aim of the Lioness is not to be dressed like other people; she seeks all the strangest material and oddest fashions; her natural audacity is shewn in her costume; she invents constantly, and *dares* much, and by these means she is always sure of being remarked.

Between the acts of Robert-le-Diable, Jules de Rouvray, a young dandy of eighteen, and cousin to Madame Dureynel, enters the Lioness's box. Jules is gifted with a very interesting face, and he looks at his cousin with a tender and pensive air. As the curtain rises he takes his leave, and Madame de Primeville begins to quiz good-naturedly his backwardness and timidity.

"Not so timid, either," says Madame Dureynel, laughing. "Look, here is a note he slipped into my hand very adroitly, upon my word. A declaration, only that! Read it; what do you think of the style? Poor boy! what can I do with his passion? His choice is very unfortunate."

Jules in fact does not know that a Lioness has very little heart; she cares not for love, and it is very difficult to please her, unless you be a prince, or have the finest horses in Paris.

Before the end of the piece, the three Lionesses leave the Opera, and go to finish the evening at the Baronne de B's, who receives on Wednesdays. Madame Dureynel, who loves gambling, begins to play bouillotte, and stakes very boldly; fortune favors her at first, and then by a sudden reverse, she loses all by a single stroke; at this moment, she sees her husband coming towards her.

"Ah! arrived at last," cries she gaily. "I was sure I should meet you here, my dear; and I am very glad, for I want to speak to you."

"I am all attention. But first tell me, my dear friend, if you have been well amused to-day. I thought of joining you at the Bois de Boulogne, but I could not possibly go. Some tiresome business on the exchange prevented me. The Railway shares are down again to day. Were you at the Opera?"

"Yes, and there I received this letter."

"Mons. Dureynel took Jules's letter, read it, and returned it to his wife with the greatest coolness, saying—"Well! what have I to do with it? These are details that concern you, and in which I am not accustomed to interfere."

"You are right, and I am quite able to take care of myself; therefore I have never troubled you with these sort of adventures; but this is a particular case: Jules is my cousin, and I don't wish to reduce him quite to despair."

"I do not understand you."

"Let me explain. I am not Jules's first love, I know that last year on leaving college he was greatly smitten with a dancer, Mademoiselle Irma, in whom they say you take a good deal of interest. This cousin of mine you see takes advantage of his relationship; he attacks you right and left, and not succeeding with your favorite dancer, he is trying to gain the heart of your wife. The enemy is dangerous; we must capitulate with him. You know me too well to suppose for a moment that I am jealous; I only speak from prudence and devoted friendship. They say that you ruin yourself for this Irma. You are wrong. Will you follow good advice? Resign in favour of our little cousin. You will thus act as a wise man and a kind relative."

"Really, if you wish it, I have no objection, particularly as I begin to be rather tired of her. To-morrow I will take Jules to breakfast there."

"That's right, dear; I am quite pleased with you."

And Madame Dureynel returns to the bouillotte, where she remains till two o'clock in the morning. The history of her life is in this one day; and time or fortune alone checks her career. At forty, Madame Dureynel retires from this brilliant and agitated world. What becomes of her afterwards? What is the fate of the Lioness grown old?

This would be a fine subject for a second La Fontaine.

CAPTAIN PUDDINGS TEAS.

CAPTAIN PIDDING'S TEAS.

The accounts lately received from Macao, bringing intelligence of the English having been totally expelled from China, and hostilities having actually commenced between Her Majesty's forces, directed by Her Superintendant in person, and Chinese men of war; in other words, China being at war with England on questions of such difficult adjustment as to render it almost impossible, and certainly improbable, that any more tea can arrive from that country for a considerable period, a great rise in all descriptions of that article has taken place. Since June last, common black teas have risen 1s. 9d., and fine green 3s., per lb. Fine Hyson, with duty, fetched at the late public Sales, 9s. 7d. per lb; fine black teas as high as 6s. 7d., whilst up to this moment, Captain Pidding has continued to allow his teas to be sold without any advance whatever. The late great rise, however, having caused a run upon his teas by the trade, who found that they could purchase them cheaper retail, than they could buy inferior teas wholesale, he is compelled to raise the price to prevent his remaining stock being purchased by tea dealers. For the present, CAPTAIN PIDDING'S HOWQUA'S MIXTURE will be sold at the rate of 6s. 8d. per lb., being 9s. the catty, or an advance of only 9d. per lb., when the commonest teas, since June, have advanced 1s. 9d. per lb. HOWQUA'S SMALL LEAF GUNPOWDER will be sold for the present, at 9s. 9d. per lb., when even Hyson, an inferior tea, is fetching, wholesale, 9s. 7d. per lb.; Half and Quarter catties in like proportion.

Captain Pidding thinks it right to inform the public that his Chinese correspondent states confidently, that there is no probability of the trade opening with that country, for, at the least, twelve months; and as the entire stock of saleable tea in Great Britain will be exhausted before that period, there is little doubt but tea will advance daily.—January, 1840

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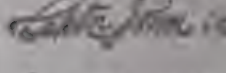
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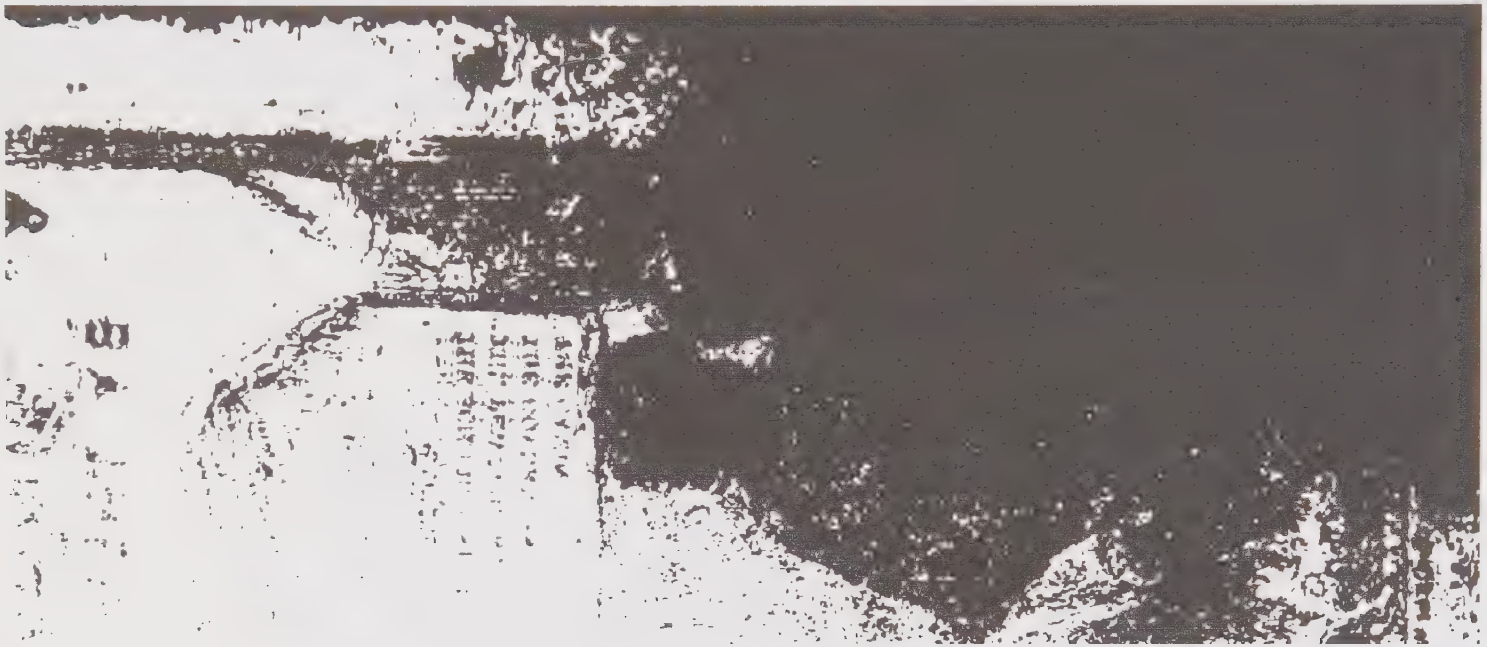
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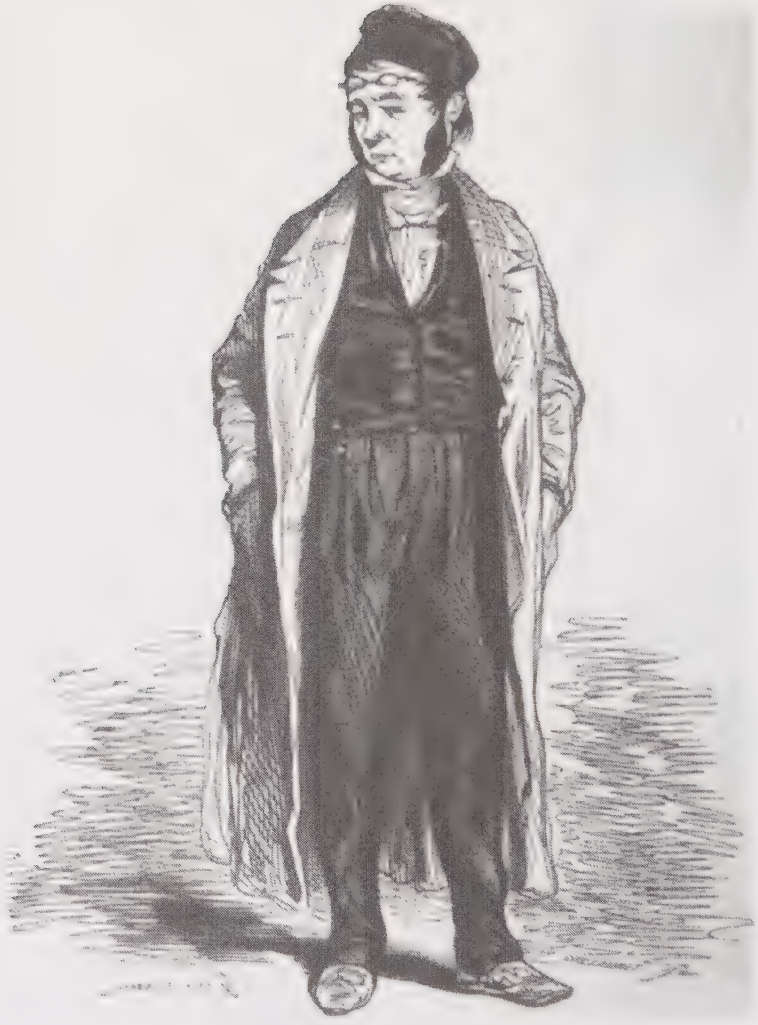
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THE SCHOOLMASTER.

BY E. REGNAULT.



LOSING every day part of her influence under repeated attacks, the French University, that eldest daughter of kings, has suffered many humiliations, and submitted to many outrages; yet she is still standing, and continues to rule the education of the French youth, and to preside over their future destiny. The truth is, that despite all its defects, the University system owes it predominance to the still greater faults of all the other systems introduced by modern reformers. A complete insight into the details of college life and discipline would afford no gratification; but still more revolting is the economy of French boarding-schools. The colleges embody the principle of those vices which in boarding-schools are fully developed.

The odium of this extensive evil does not attach, however, to the Schoolmaster, but to the heads of families, who make Schoolmasters what they are.

A boarding-school is an asylum open to the weakness of parents, whose fondness dreads the fancied over-severe discipline of college, to children spoiled from their cradle by injudicious maternal indulgence—to *tardy* intellects that university discipline has failed to illumine. It may be considered as an hospital

for the moral and intellectual infirmities of a whole family; but those infirmities are incurable; and for an incurable disease no physician is needed. Such patients require a quack; and a quack, perforce, must the Schoolmaster be, in spite of his conscience. A pupil is brought to him to educate, but he has been previously trained to vicious habits that no master can eradicate. The Schoolmaster's advice is asked, but at the same, time an opinion is imposed upon him; he is required to say the truth, but he must utter falsehood to avoid giving offence. Deceit is part of his profession; he must practice deception, or starve. Between two such alternatives he has no choice. Hence the very failings that promote the success of boarding-schools, encourage the vices by which those establishments are generally disgraced.

Education is a matter of such extreme social importance that it is lamentable to see the future destiny of whole generations abandoned like a toy to the caprice of a weak woman. Most mothers are accustomed to regard their children as their personal property, and of this property they are more jealous than of any other, because they control it without their husband's legal authority. And to use the words of the Roman law, they use and abuse this right. A child is to them a mere puppet to dress and undress, and shew off for the gratification of their vanity; they make of it an idol or a slave, and play with it as they played with their dolls. If they do not send their sons to college, they prepare for the Schoolmaster a most arduous task. Many restrictions are imposed upon him when they entrust their property to his care. There is no end to their precautions. They ensure a close attention to their instructions, by making it a condition, *siné quâ non*, of their engagement with the Schoolmaster; and they confine him in such narrow limits that he is left without authority, and his influence is lost at the outset.

Many men there are who in this respect are like women. "I am the best judge what education will befit my son," cries one. Now this we dispute. A father has none of a judge's qualifications. Ye fathers! adore your sons since such is your pleasure, and make them your idols. Admire in them your own image; but do not enter the temple of education; there you can only commit sacrilege.

Certain country families and shopkeepers of the Rue St. Denis send their sons to a boarding-school from economical motives. They suppose in their simplicity that they will have to pay only a certain sum per annum. But as the state budget has its items of extraordinary expenses, so at boarding-schools there are numerous "extras;" and cheap education is nearly as visionary a scheme as cheap government.

It is a happy moment in the schoolmaster's life when he sees a stranger enter his drawing-room leading by the hand a little boy ten or twelve years old. But, before the instalment of his new pupil, before he can add another to his flock, the Schoolmaster must submit to numerous senseless commentaries and im-

pertinent dissertations. "Sir," a lawyer or a physician will say, "the system of education followed at our universities is inconsistent with the progress of the times. Pray what, let me ask, is the use of Greek and Latin, the wretched legacy of the Jesuits? The natural sciences, Sir, the natural sciences ought to form the basis of every good education." Here follows a long physiological harangue which the Schoolmaster takes care not to interrupt; for one of the golden rules of his profession is, never to be unseasonably clever. "Above all, Sir," continues the father, "no bigotry, none of those narrow-minded precepts that cramp a child's understanding. I decidedly object to confession. I do not see any necessity for a child to revive his past faults; and as to the punishments he may deserve, I trust to you to inflict them."

No sooner has the Schoolmaster bowed the sceptical father out of his house, than he receives a visit from a pious mother, who has recourse to him because the colleges seem to her dens of irreligion; in a private institution she hopes to meet with the holy traditions that are gradually passing away, and some remains of that faith no longer to be found in the government schools. The Schoolmaster is now obliged to assume as much devotion as a few minutes before he displayed indifference. He readily finds some pious words, quotes a text or two from the New Testament; deplores the corruption of the age, and nets another pupil.

Thus he passes his life. Dragged in contrary directions, assaulted by the most opposite ideas; acquiescing in all, but determined to foster none—he combats no prejudice—he submits to all sorts of vanities, he encourages every weakness. But do not accuse him of hypocrisy; he only fulfils the conditions of his existence, and obeys the law of his being; such is the line of conduct marked out for him, and from it he cannot swerve. Talk to the Schoolmaster of truth, indeed! Why, truth would be the ruin of him.

The more numerous his pupils, the more concessions the Schoolmaster has to make, the more caprices he has to soothe, the more prejudices he has to flatter. His moral turpitude is exactly proportioned to his income; his income increases in inverted ratio to his probity.

Fettered as he is on all sides by so many conflicting injunctions from parents, it is no wonder that the Schoolmaster cannot pursue a methodical system of tuition or discipline. The boarding-school having been preferred in order to avoid college regulations, every parent has "regulations" of his own. There are pupils who go home every fortnight, and others who go home every week; one leaves on Saturday night, another on Sunday morning; one before mass, another after mass. One boy is instructed in Greek and Latin, another in Latin without Greek; one studies the living languages only, the studies of another are confined to the natural sciences; one follows Jacotot's system, another Robertson's, and the third, according to his father's express will, follows no system at all. Anarchy is imposed on the Schoolmaster and the children; anarchy in his studies, anarchy in discipline, anarchy in morals. Pupils delight in it; but it is only with sor-

row that the Schoolmaster submits to it. Those conscientious Schoolmasters who attempt to resist the contagion, expose themselves to increasing toil and struggle. Many give way; a few, (and very rare exceptions they are,) succeed: by far the greater number accept the yoke, and make the best of it. But no one has turned his ever-ready compliance with parental injunctions to better account than worthy M. Moisson.

M. Moisson is about fifty years of age, short and stout, yet active and smart; lively and loquacious, despite his pretensions to dignity. His small bright eyes are continually revolving in their orbits, as if their owner were always in the presence of a troop of unruly boys. It is plain that he is accustomed to look half-a-dozen ways at once in his schoolroom. There is about him a certain mixture of haughtiness and servility, of humility and pride, indicative of his nature being made up of these two very opposite elements. But they are distributed in such equal proportions that it would be difficult to say whether obedience has taught him to command, or whether the habit of commanding has taught him to obey.

By his side, in all the beatitude of a well-assorted union, flourishes Madame Moisson, the faithful keeper of the keys of the cellar, the vigilant she-dragon who guards the pantry and larder from the depredations of servants and pupils. She it is who waters the wine, distributes rations of bread, cuts up the meat into slices, always mindful of the geometrical definition of surface—"Length and breadth without thickness."

Madame Moisson rarely makes her appearance in the drawing-room: her temple is the pantry; the kitchen is her sanctuary. There she receives the compliments of anxious mothers desirous of studying the culinary and dietetic departments of the establishment. She proudly displays the broth browned with sugar, and boasts that it contains no burnt onions. With unwearied assiduity she watches the servants' every motion, finds fault if they are a moment unoccupied, personally superintends all that is going forward, turns everything to the utmost possible account, and not unreasonably glories in being the keystone of the establishment. If a Schoolmaster would succeed, he must provide himself with a wife who fears neither smoke nor grease spots. He who prefers an amiable helpmate to a good housekeeper, will never make a fortune: it is doubtful if he will ever obtain the cross of the Legion of Honour.

Madame Moisson also superintends in person the washing, repairing, and ironing of the scholars' linen. She loves to display the numbered clothes of each boy in their proper compartment. To do her justice, the laundering and repairing of the boys' linen are very creditable to her. But it must be added, that in every trunk two or three towels are invariably missing. The parents being always ignorant of the deficiency until their son leaves school, the loss is attributed to the thoughtlessness natural to childhood, or to the ravages of that destructive spoiler, time.

One of the rules of the school is, on the departure of each boy, to levy a pair of sheets on his stock—"for the use of the infirmary." Now this infirmary is quite nominal; for in the event of a severe fit of illness, the mother invariably has her son at home; and when his indisposition is only slight, the scholar reposes in the linen room, where he is so drenched with camomile tea that he soon longs to return to schoolroom diet.

No valid reason can be opposed to the levy of the sheets, it being duly set forth in the prospectus of the school; and with prospectuses, as with laws, everybody is supposed to be acquainted.

Be this as it may, certain it is that this contribution is very productive to Madame Moisson, who is a farmer's daughter, and consequently inherits an inordinate love of hoarding linen, of which she has more than enough for several generations. In the indulgence of her rustic and primitive avarice, she accumulates linen in presses instead of gold in a strong box; and this her ruling passion enables her to assume a sublime stoicism upon the unexpected departure of a pupil. "My dear," she calmly replies to her husband's expressions of regret, "it will be another pair of sheets."

His pupils' instruction gives M. Moisson very little anxiety. But academical prizes, being of considerable importance for a private school, because they make a surprising number of dupes in the eighty-six departments of France, M. Moisson knows how to obtain for his establishment a creditable share in their distribution. Every year he regularly consults the lists of successful competitors for the prizes given by the university, and makes enquiry into the circumstances of their parents; the poorer of them he makes it his business to visit, to propose a free admission into his boarding school. "It is a rule sanctioned by long usage," says he, "to educate the deserving poor." Thus he disguises his speculation under charitable pretences, and his offer is rarely declined; for the parents, giving the lie to their conscience, affect a complete belief in the Schoolmaster's generous disposition, while in fact they are making shameful merchandize of their children. It is in short neither more nor less than a slightly modified slaving transaction, in which young souls and intelligent minds are bartered for a paltry pittance and parsimonious hospitality. In this way the innocent glory of the academical competitions becomes a chain to the young laureate; his success is turned to account, his vigils are made profitable; and like the Roman slave, he hands over to his master the fruit of his labours. Thanks to this well-organised traffic, M. Moisson's "Academy" shines in the university competitions; and the speculator never fails every year to go over the market, and make fresh purchases of intellect which to him is a double source of profit. The hard-working children of the poor help to build up his reputation, while the over-indulged children of the rich bring him a handsome yearly income.

It is known that in a boarding-school the private distribution of prizes is only a well managed division of crowns among all the pupils. M. Moisson is too

well acquainted with his trade not to be a strict observer of the good old custom. From the student of natural philosophy down to the child in his accidence, every scholar has his share in the awarded prizes. This bait is so plain, this charlatanism so glaring, that it would seem astonishing how year after year the same thing is repeated with periodical obstinacy in presence of parents, without opening their eyes. But no; this is no wonder, nor is the schoolmaster deserving of censure. Again we have to plead for him, fatal necessity. The Schoolmaster knows that all mothers, aye, and most fathers, will accuse him of the want of success of their sons. He must therefore get up a little success for every one of them. There is no father who sees any partiality in his son's triumph; he may complain of the multiplicity of the prizes, but he will firmly believe that his son unquestionably deserved his.

M. Moisson knows all this, and takes care never to lose a pupil through an unseasonable regard to truth. Abstract principles are unprofitable things, and the Schoolmaster foregoes them for action: he may contemn foibles, but he flatters them for the sake of the rich harvest he reaps by his sophistry.

The ceremony of the distribution of prizes is attended by a solemn pomp that adds to the maternal illusions, and throws a classical colouring over the affair. The boys' red coverlets serve for temporary hangings, and are suspended round the dining-room, cleared of the table for the occasion. Festoons of ivy decorate the walls, of which the doubtful colour and stains are scarcely hidden by the designs of the most eminent draughtsmen of the school, and the specimens of writing by the most able calligraphers. An old carpet is thrown over a clumsy temporary dais, raised three or four steps from the floor, on which stands a long table heaped with books and laurel crowns. In the centre are placed three arm-chairs covered with cotton velvet; one is for the mentor who is to distribute the prizes, the other two being reserved for the parish priest and the mayor of the *arrondissement*. M. Moisson's policy is always to be on good terms with authorities spiritual and temporal.

Accompanied by the priest and the Mayor—supported, as it were, by church and state—M. Moisson gravely makes his entry. His step is stately, his countenance beams with happiness, his looks are radiant. Deliberately he ascends the dais, obsequiously offers an arm-chair to each of his august guests, and takes his stand in a meditative attitude. He brings forward his leg, throws out his breast, and with head erect prepares to speak. "Young pupils!"—(here he pauses, the auditory being on the tenter-hooks of suspense.)—"The sun has at last risen on the auspicious day fixed for the close of your labours, and their reward"—(another solemn pause).—"How delightful the task to proclaim the names of the glorious young laureates, whom my lessons have led on to victory! Affecting triumphs! pacific struggles! in which the competitors are brothers, and conquerors and conquered are united by the ties of mutual friendship."—Here a third solemn pause.) We will not follow M. Moisson through all the

labyrinth of his rhetoric; suffice it to say, that if his speech is not a literary production of rare excellence, it is at least a masterpiece of speculation. Every tender hint likely to touch the sensibility of a mother, every sonorous apostrophe calculated to flatter paternal vanity, he one by one skilfully employs. His voice is trained to the most varied modulations, now soft and melodious, in celebration of the joys of the family circle, now stirring as the trumpet blast as he proclaims the young laureate's glory. At last, after dragging in the Maréchal de Villar's hackneyed saying, he invariably winds up with these words:—"Come then, young champions of science, and receive the reward of your intelligent efforts."

And now a deafening shout of applause bursts from every part of the room; the pupils' mothers wave their handkerchiefs, and the noise only ceases to be renewed again as each name is called, until all have been proclaimed and all applauded: when M. Moisson modestly steals away from the eager compliments of his voluntary dupes, whom he leaves enraptured with the merits of a boarding-school in which every scholar is "head boy."

There is in every year another day marked by M. Moisson for a display of eloquence and pomp, namely his *jour de fête*. His patron saint is that of the great majority of the middle class, Saint John, beyond question the most *fêted* saint in the kalendar.

A few weeks prior to the happy anniversary, the head usher, dubbed for the nonce "inspector," makes the scholars write a circular letter, which always begins nearly as follows:—

"My dear Mamma,—It being the earnest wish of myself and schoolfellows to agreeably surprise our excellent Schoolmaster on his *jour de fête*, &c."

The letter is purposely addressed to the mothers, because they are more easily induced to consent to these apparently voluntary contributions. The father of each pupil considers himself bound to give no less than the rest; so that the false tenderness of the wives, combined with the puerile vanity of their husbands, speedily produces a good round sum to mark the pupils' gratitude.

The inspector being the confidant of his young friends' intention, is naturally appointed to receive their parents' contributions; he also is commissioned to select the article to be presented as a token of their united feelings. Of course M. Moisson is consulted by the usher on this important subject; and as his tastes are particularly bent towards the useful, he generally selects a piece of plate, which never loses its value. In this manner the worthy M. Moisson, by a long series of unexpected presents from his scholars, has become the owner of a handsome service of plate, which might have excited the envy of many members of the aristocracy, when there was an aristocracy in France.

The anniversary arrived, the scholars, who know that a surprise is also in store for them, in the shape of a holiday, dress themselves in their best clothes; and

immediately after breakfast, falling into ranks and headed by the inspector, rush into the drawing-room, where, by a singular chance, they find M. Moisson, full dressed as if for the occasion. The Schoolmaster assumes his annual look of good-humoured astonishment. When all the scholars have ranged themselves in a circle, the piece of plate is produced and placed on the table, and the rhetorician of the school delivers an address, composed in Latin verse, in praise of good masters. As the Virgilian harangue proceeds, M. Moisson's emotion increases; his bosom heaves, and his humid eyes wander from the plate to his pupils, from his pupils to the plate. "My dear young friends," he cries directly the orator has concluded, "my beloved pupils, my heart is too full for me to make a suitable acknowledgement of your delicate attention, as unexpected as undeserved. I can only regret that you have testified your affection by so expensive a gift. A simple flower would have sufficed, if a flower were as lasting as my tender interest for your welfare and happiness." He concludes by inviting the boys to partake of a rural dinner in the Bois de Boulogne.

The reader must not imagine that M. Moisson on this occasion orders an expensive dinner at a restaurateur's; that would be paying too dearly for the piece of plate. Legs of mutton were roasted overnight, and these, with a plentiful supply of sausages, and a few scraggy chickens, make up the feast.

The arrangements are soon made, and the pupils set out, one carrying plates, another bread, a third a leg of mutton. The wine M. Moisson buys on the spot, outside the barriers, to save the town duty.

Certainly one must have a heart susceptible of all the facile joys of childhood, to find pleasure in a dinner on the grass. To us, indeed, it seems a little too patriarchal, but the scholars are delighted with anything for a change. Bound by the rules of the school to observe silence at meals, they are conscious of temporary freedom in being able to speak, and it seems to them that their power increases in the same ratio as their uproar. They make a liberal use of this unwonted privilege, and intoxicate themselves with words.

On the appearance of dessert, M. Moisson again addresses the schoolboys, and after congratulating himself on the happy day, he humbly apologises for the simple fare. "However," he adds, "when I contemplate the happy faces around me, all animated by the same sentiment of unfeigned joy, I may surely say with the poet—

"Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit."

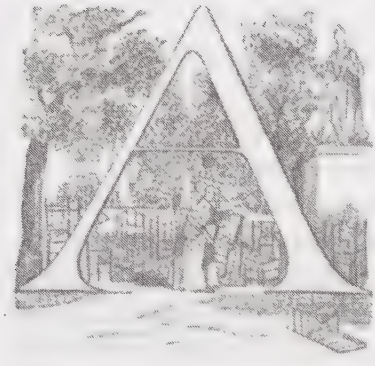
M. Moisson has long since reaped the fruit of his patient deceptions. Proprietor of more than one estate, he has already the required qualifications to be an elector or a deputy. When he gives up his school, it is his intention to contest his department, and so preside over the destinies of France, when he shall be too old to preside over his school.





THE PEW-OPENER.*

BY F. COQUILLE.



CHURCH considered only in a temporal point of view, (and it would be most indecorous and much against our feelings to speak of it otherwise in this paper,) might be called a building ornamented with a Pew-opener.

In these days when the architectural form has no distinguishing expression, the Pew-opener is, for a sacred building, a sure characteristic; some of our modern churches have attempted, amidst other recent innovations, to dispense with bells and steeple, those signs so long proverbial, but none ever tried to do without a Pew-opener. She is the necessary appendage which distinguishes a church from any other building, she gives it life and movement, in fact, she constitutes it a church. When the shadows of night have descended upon the im-

* In most churches in France there are no pews, and seats consist of chairs, for the use of which a fixed price (generally a halfpenny) is to be paid by those who visit the church. This species of tax is farmed out, for the benefit of the church, and the contractor being almost universally a female, is called "La Loueuse de Chaises." The proper name for the subject of this paper would be, therefore, "the chair-letter;" but to be better understood, we have preserved the English name of "Pew-opener."

mense aisle, the whole edifice seems buried in profound repose. At intervals the solemn silence is disturbed by some noise from without, which faintly repeated by the echo, dies away in a prolonged murmur. Soon after, day breaks, the city wakens, and the bells announce the *Angelus*. The clerk makes his appearance, the dispenser of the holy water arrives shivering, and showing that frozen look which forms one of his attributes—the seller of wax-candles prepares a complete illumination. Some poor women are on their knees praying while they are waiting for the first mass; but the church is still slumbering, as a man is restless and breathing heavily, just before he wakens entirely.

At last the Pew-opener appears, and the building, on her arrival, seems to undergo a complete change. She visits her domain in every part; the flagstones resound with the noise of the chairs, as she arranges them in rows, or piles them one upon the other. Some amongst them bear not her mark, and their elegance contrasts with the coarse simplicity of the others; they are made of polished mahogany; the straw work is fine, and the form graceful, and while the back is fitted with a sort of desk upon which the arms may lean comfortably, there is also a thick hassock to receive the knees of the fair devotee. The Pew-opener moves these aristocratic chairs with a reverential hand; and as she carefully replaces them, she calculates the profits they will bring her—so much for the right of having a privileged seat; so much every Sunday for the pleasure of finding the chair in the same place; so much at Christmas and parish fêtes, without counting little extras.

Knowing the value of time, she attends to many things at once, and finds besides a moment to gossip with the clerk and the beadle, and to hear the civil speeches of the wax-candle-seller. All these persons belonging to the church, have some affinity in manners, language, habits, and interests. They may be seen in the morning descanting together upon the intrigues of the vestry, and the rivalries of the choir; they jump by bold transitions from sacred to profane histories; the beadle of course is scandalized, and makes signs to the interruptors; he affects to pass and repass by them, but, oh, frail humanity! this grave personage, after vainly trying to catch some words of the conversation by stretching out his neck to listen, unable any longer to repress his curiosity, joins at last the group; and as he speaks rarely and is not in the habit of modulating his tones, he makes more noise than all the rest.

The Pew-opener never allows herself to be detained more than a few minutes by these conferences; whether she be talking or listening, she looks full of business, and appears always on the move; her hands are fidgetting in the empty pockets of her apron. And when the officiating priest ascends the altar, she returns to her duties.

While she goes her round, let us explain in a few words her functions and their privileges.

We must preface by stating for the edification of our readers, that the hire of

the chairs in the principal churches in Paris, brings in a considerable revenue; there are some parishes where the sum paid by contract to the churchwardens, is not less than One Thousand pounds per annum. It is not our province to discuss here the advantages or disadvantages of this species of tax levied upon the people attending church; but we hope that the time may come when gratuitous accommodation will be provided in the house of God.

However, at present this contract is become at the expiration of each lease, the object of violent competition. The churchwardens are not allowed to sleep for a fortnight; the candidates exert themselves as if for the most valuable sinecure. But the office is far from being a sinecure, it is a business like any other, and requires the most persevering exertions. The contractor attends to it from morning till night; there is no rest, no intermission.

This valuable privilege is generally granted to a female. To carry off the prize from her rivals she must command considerable interest; she can be nothing less than the widow of the parish clerk, who died a favourite with the vicar; the god-daughter of a churchwarden; or the niece of the curate. A celebrated preacher, or a rich banker upholds her with his patronage; the rector is warmly solicited in her favour; spiritual and temporal powers rise to her aid; and her talent for intrigue, and her diplomatic skill do the rest. She has at last succeeded in obtaining the high title which will hereafter become her only appellation; her neighbours and her relatives perhaps may still call her Widow Groslichard or Madame Piedfort; but she will be known only by the frequenters of the church as the "Loueuse de Chaises."

The Widow Groslichard is past thirty—how much is of little consequence; it is a secret which she keeps most religiously to herself, and even her confessor is not more favoured on this delicate point than any of her confidants. She maintains that people are never older than they look, and therefore she endeavours to look as young as possible. Madame Groslichard is a little plump rosy woman, exquisitely clean, lively, and active. It is said that she was very gay in her youth, and the high situation she has just obtained does not contradict the assertion—quite the contrary.

It would be most unfair to judge her by the simplicity of her dress, which she has slipped on in haste, for she must attend the first mass, but for the sake only of the pecuniary profits she expects from it. She knows well how much women may be indebted to their dress; and if she is never seen with a worldly attire, which in her situation would appear more exceptionable than attractive; there is in the simplicity of her costume a wonderful skill, and even in its occasional displays, her art is never wanting in discretion. She is distinguished for the refined coquetry, quite peculiar to the church people—far superior to that of the world.

Madame Groslichard is not unlike the chameleon, her face varies for each service, she has even for each person a different expression of countenance. It is

not with the same manner that she takes the money from the poor woman, or receives it from the rich devotees. With the former she is somewhat harsh and imperious; her voice, which she can soften at pleasure, is shrill; her eyes so meek and coaxing when she likes, look fierce, and when she says, "Your chairs if you please"—the "if you please" sounds like an imperative command.

Her hooked fingers seem incessantly tendered towards you. Do not think to escape her observation; she loses sight of no one in her round: she approaches you little by little, in a minute she will be by your side; mechanically you feel in your pockets, and unlucky will it be for you if they are empty; for the Pew-opener, like the ant in Lafontaine's fable, does not like to give credit; you of course are aware of it, and this thought sadly disturbs your meditations and prayers. It is in vain that you attempt to avoid her by taking refuge in an obscure corner; she watches, she follows you, she is behind you in an instant, and you are scarcely seated when you hear the fatal "Your chair, if you please."

Observe how in a similar position the most elegant ladies ask in a soft and humble voice credit till next Sunday. Almost invariably Madame Groslichard resigns herself to consent readily to this forced loan; she tries even to call up a smile, although from the bottom of her heart she detests those who forget their purses when they come to prayers. However she derives a little consolation from the thought of her magnanimous generosity; but at the same time she never neglects to take an exact description of her debtors, and as with a patronising air she turns away, she seems to say, "A lady of such an age, with such a face, and such a dress, owes me *one penny*."

Behind her, and at a suitable distance, walks the silent beadle or the majestic Swiss. He marches up the aisle, and announces his coming by striking the stones with his staff, and crying in a fluted voice, "For the poor, if you please," or oftener still, "For repairs of the church." On this subject we have a word to say: Many people imagine that there is a competition between the collectors and the Pew-opener, and that they vie with one another for precedence. This is an error. The order in which they follow has been cleverly arranged: the tribute levied by the Pew-opener is forced, the other is voluntary; and people absorbed in their prayers could very well be excused for not taking out their purses for the poor, still less for the church; but they must allow themselves to be disturbed to pay for their chairs, and while they have still the money in their hands, the collector arrives a-propos on the steps of the Pew-opener, who thus plays the character of the *pilot* to the *shark*. She loses nothing by it and the poor are benefited, to say nothing of the church.

From the ease of her deportment, and the airs she assumes, it is easy to perceive that at church Madame Groslichard is quite at home. Household cares are unknown to her: she lives by the church and in the church. She can scarcely consent to eat and sleep elsewhere, and would willingly give her address—Madame Grosilchard, at Saint * * * 's church. She is quite con-

scious of her dignity, and carries her head high. She yields neither to the ill temper of the vicar, nor to the caprices of the curate. These great dignitaries generally greet her with a word and a smile; but, must it be avowed? Madame Groslichard is not sufficiently impressed with the feelings of respect and veneration which are their due: she lives too near the sanctuary. "No man is a prophet in his own country," has been long a proverb; we will hazard a little variation, and say, "No priest is a saint in the vestry of his church."

Madame Groslichard raised to her eminent situation and high credit, sharing the incense of the priest and treasuring up the profits of her contract, is very excusable in not condescending to notice the humble dispenser of the holy water, and in treating without much ceremony the pompous clerk, the hoarse choristers who compliment her with psalm-singing voices, and even the organist whom people are surprised to hear speak like other men.

These, however, are so many aspirants either for her hand or her good graces. She plays the coquette with them, one days holds out some hopes, and the next is most peremptory in refusing every offer. She likes, in this manner, to keep them in suspense. Occasionally she condescends to tap the plump and rosy cheeks of the infant choristers, and honours the superb Suisse with a sly glance. These *Suisses* have much to answer for.

Whatever may have been the case formerly, Madame Groslichard has now the reputation of being strictly correct in her conduct; it is one of the conditions of her contract, and she has lived long enough not to sacrifice her interest to her feelings: happily the sacrifice does not always prove necessary. We have quoted already one of her favorite maxims, "People are never older than they look;" she is also accustomed to say, "Persons are only what they appear to be."

And perhaps with her it is better not to pursue our investigation too far; for instance, she affects all the outward semblance of piety; and you will see her at the beginning of mass devoutly kneeling, and apparently absorbed in pious meditation; but she has selected the best place to command the whole church; and mark her, you will see her piercing and inquisitive eyes wander without ceasing, and notice the entrance into the church of every member of the congregation. Her voice is never heard joining in the praises of God; when she sings, it is to herself, and only because the service has been *good*, she means by it her collection abundant, and when she feels in her large pocket pieces of silver mingled in a satisfactory proportion with the copper.

It is her duty to assist at all the ceremonies affecting the destinies of man. The bell-ringer, who from the top of his tower, announces a death or a christening, much resembles the man working the telegraph, he does not understand the news he is transmitting. But the Pew-opener has an intelligent part to play in these worldly pomps, and her countenance assumes on every occasion a suitable expression. At a christening, she takes the liveliest interest in the infant; she

is extremely attentive to the sponsors; and from the pure and unaffected joy which sparkles in her eyes, from her almost maternal anxiety, you would take her for an aunt, or a grandmother, or certainly some near relative of the family. These demonstrations form part of the church ceremonies, and belong to the Pew-opener's department; a regular fee is exacted for them. But the scene changes abruptly; the church is hung with black; a family are deeply affected; friends weep and pray round a coffin. The Pew-opener puts on her most sorrowful face, her eyes are red; she steps with a noiseless tread, and seems to say to each assistant, "What a calamity!—Your chair, if you please."

While one eye is still weeping with the friends of the deceased, the other smiles at the wedding which is *now* approaching. It is a brilliant party; the bride is pretty, and the happy bridegroom will no doubt be generous. Madame Groslichard is in extacies; her little sly look says all sorts of things; without her the whole ceremony would be wrong. There she is to render prompt assistance to the fainting bride, and receive her in her arms. She will be unremitting in those little attentions for which a mother is disabled by her agitation, and which would now be unbecoming in the bridegroom: he is only entitled to pay for them. On these occasions the Pew-opener is a mother given, or rather lent on hire by the church.

Madame Groslichard understands neither the love of country, nor national vanity, but she is proud of her church. Talk to her of a chorister with an extraordinary voice, of an altar richly decorated, of a splendid organ, of some celebrated saint; *her* chorister is sure to sing more wonderfully, *her* altar to be richer, *her* organ to be more magnificent, *her* saint to perform more extraordinary miracles. The church belongs to her; all that is done there, is done for her. It is for her that mass is said, that the altar is decorated and illuminated, that the bells ring, that the choristers sing, and that the organ peals in harmonious concert. It is for her also that people are born and die; and those fashionable preachers who are sure to attract a large congregation, who fulminate anathemas against vice, and vehemently exclaim against avarice and selfishness, labour no doubt to reap a rich harvest for heaven, but the first gatherings are for the Pew-opener; she has an infallible means of appreciating these sacred orators, and is never at a loss to estimate their merit. She does not judge them by what they say, but by what their sermons bring her; she weighs their reputation in solid money. Although the pious exhortation may fall unheeded on the ears of the congregation, the Pew-opener stores away carefully the *fruit* she has reaped from it.

Madame Groslichard should be seen on the grand fête days, on the anniversary of the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, when the church shines forth in all its splendour, and when the price of the chairs is double! These are truly important epochs. For Madame Groslichard they are the happiest days in the year. If they would but happen a little oftener! She looks

forward to them with impatience; she calculates beforehand the money they will bring her; she hopes the parishioners will manifest much religious fervour, and that a crowd of spectators, attracted by the pomp of the ceremonies, will swell the assemblage and the receipt. From early morn she is dressed in her best; she takes with her as an indispensable auxiliary, as a faithful lieutenant, a daughter, or a neice, whose shyness is betrayed by her embarrassed countenance. She assigns to her assistant the least important posts. The nave of the church is surrounded by a wooden balustrade, and resembles a citadel; under the organ there is a narrow space reserved for the elect of this world, who will also be the elect and well-beloved of the Pew-opener; there she establishes her daughter. She remains a few moments by her side to assist her with her advice, and encourage her by her example; and then, like a skilful general, she visits the different posts; and reserves for herself the most arduous: she takes the outskirts and *cross allies*. She threads her way carefully through the ever-moving crowd, and the densest mass does not impede her progress; she is everywhere at once. Little feminine scruples she treads under foot; she thinks not in these moments of her elegant appearance; she sacrifices her handsome dress; she cares little that her clothes should be torn or crushed in the crowd where she forces herself; this is not the time to be prudish and vain, or over-cautious, the precious moments must be turned to better account.

Observe her when the service is nearly over, and that her gleaning is only half finished. What anxiety, what restlessness! Her eyes are at once upon those who remain, those who are going, and those who are preparing to go; she does not walk, she glides along. Do not detain her for change of your silver coin, lest she return you as many maledictions as pence. But the last sound of the organ is dying away; Madame Groslichard worn out with fatigue, lets a few women escape without paying, and she remains exhausted on the field of battle. Soon she walks off with her earnings and the poor who have caught the metallic sound of her pockets, follow her a long time with their supplications; but they obtain nothing from her but a piece of five centimes, which she strongly suspects to be a false coin.

The Pew-opener generally amasses a considerable income. She establishes her daughter, and makes over to her, as a wedding present, the contract that has been so profitable to herself. She leaves the church to enter the world. The older she grows, the more coquettish she becomes, and her love of flattery, dress, and scandal is unbounded.

When at church she cannot endure to be disturbed to pay for her chair; and she is particularly annoyed that at the grand fêtes the price should be doubled.

It is said that mingling the sacred and the profane, the chairs in the gardens of the Tuileries, the Champs Elysées, and the Boulevarts, belong also to Madame Groslichard: we cannot believe it. To pass from the shade and cool atmosphere into the dust and burning sun, to be dependent for her gains upon

the caprice of the fashion, or the weather, would be beneath her dignity, and besides, would not be so profitable.

However if the person letting out the chairs in the public walks does not belong to the church, sometimes there are indications which tend to prove that she has once belonged to it. The failure of a banker, or a notary, an unfortunate speculation in the Spanish funds, the Asphalte companies, or the railways, may perhaps have swallowed up at once the capital she had accumulated penny by penny, and she is reduced in her old age to have recourse to her former trade.

But she feels degraded from her sphere; she has no sympathy with the joyous crowd, through which she passes and repasses. Old and wrinkled, she abhors the sight of youth and beauty; the gay dresses, the animated groups, the confused murmur of a hundred different conversations, the various effects of light and shade produced by the moving foliage of the trees, the rich rays of the setting sun, the bright hues of heaven and earth sadden and discompose her. She experiences a cruel pleasure in dispelling the most agreeable reveries, and interrupting the most interesting tête-a têtes. She appears suddenly, and stands before you like a living reproach, straight and rigid, with a harsh and austere countenance. She looks so grief-worn, that at her approach the tongue is hushed, and the laugh expires upon the lips: one feels obliged to have some respect for a woman, who from her appearance must have been crushed by some misfortune. Of all her former person she retains only her red nose, and hooked fingers; these seem to grow longer every year.

She is a sort of wandering Jew; nothing stops her, nothing draws her attention from her task; she goes her way taking a survey of every new physiognomy, and counting each party as they make their appearance. Some people are known to establish themselves upon *her* chairs, and to occupy them for hours. She throws at these from time to time glances of indignation, and seems always inclined to make them pay twice. In the midst of an interesting conversation, if her eyes should be intently fixed upon you, you will perhaps imagine that she is trying to overhear what you are saying; she does not care the least in the world about it—she is only thinking "*have they paid me?*"

The year has but one short season for her, and alas! the days of rain and cold shorten it still more. When the leaves fade and fall covering the walks not long ago so frequented, the Chair-letter disappears; she is seen only on Sundays in the Tuileries, and she wanders to and fro like a troubled spirit.





THE GOVERNESS.

BY MADAME LOUISE COLLET.



DIFFERENT in many respects are the characters of the Governess and Schoolmistress. The Schoolmistress averages from forty to sixty; she is rather the manager than the teacher of her establishment, she is more preoccupied with its profits, than by the studies that are there followed, and it is more important for her to be a good housekeeper than a well informed woman. The superintendence of the lessons she confides entirely to the teachers she engages, and the lessons themselves she leaves to the masters. Information and accomplishments would in her be mere superfluities, and she is not always over-particular in her spelling. As there is no inconsistency in a theatrical manager not being a dramatic author, so is it not requisite that a Schoolmistress should be a learned or a talented woman; this might be illustrated by many examples. But let us come at once to our subject.

All governesses, from whatever cause they engage in the profession, are from twenty-five to thirty-five years of age, never less, seldom more. Until she reaches twenty-five, the young lady brought up as a governess is teacher in the school where she has been educated. She is generally the daughter of some

small tradesman, or petty "bourgeois," who expects that all his children will manage to get their own living as early as possible, and she devotes herself to tuition, just in the same way as she would be a milliner, a dressmaker, or a shopwoman, to gain her daily bread.

She is under the necessity of choosing a profession, and from vocation she becomes a Governess. She knows just enough of grammar, history, geography, music and drawing, with a smattering of English and Italian, to present herself to those thoughtless mothers who almost blindly entrust to a stranger the direction of their daughters' hearts and minds.

With her superficial knowledge, she fancies herself competent to undertake and complete education. Truly conscious of her worth, she sets forth boldly, but without ostentation or affected modesty, her universal acquirements, and on the strength of her own estimate, she obtains a situation; but ere long her abilities are questioned. The pupil makes no progress, and in self-defence the Governess complains of her inattention and want of application, and proposes that masters should be engaged to rouse her from her indolence and thoughtlessness. Two lessons a week, she says, and for accomplishments only will be sufficient.

However, soon after, the mother delighted with the unexpected progress of her daughter, engages masters to come every day, and teach not only accomplishments, but languages, history, and everything that the Governess still professes to know thoroughly; from this moment she becomes a mere superintendent, in reality useless; yet it is difficult to dispense with her, for she is willing to render every service in her power. She excels in needle-work, makes purses and Greek caps for the gentleman, works collars and handkerchiefs for the lady, trims her pupil's ball dresses, and occasionally dresses her hair. She also embroiders articles of furniture for the drawing-room, reads aloud to the family, writes the invitations, settles the accounts, and looks after the servants. Thus she acts as a sort of factotum, and remains only a nominal governess.

Generally speaking, the Governess prefers an engagement in one of those families whose income, although moderate, enables them to enjoy all the comforts of life. She contributes her mite to the calm pleasures of their peaceful household, seldom disturbed by the storm of passions, but where order and economy are paramount. Some relations and a few old friends dine there regularly once a week, when they are called upon to judge of the progress of her pupil, which the Governess shows off with the greatest solicitude. She performs in those family circles an important part, she accompanies ballads, plays quadrilles out of time and tune, gets up charades, presides at the tea-table, and cuts the cake.

In her hours of solitary leisure the Governess often reads some treatise on education. She goes through the book by routine, as the priest reads his breviary, but she thus contrives to be always mindful of her duties, and she fills her memory with pedantic maxims, unproductive seeds which she scatters indiscriminately in the young minds committed to her care, creating there nothing but ennui.

The Governess by vocation, is, on the whole, a good creature, she has neither wit nor imagination; but her natural good sense enables her to steer her way through the various families in which she passes her life. She follows the humble tenor of her path, and treads in the little furrow marked out before her, contending steadily against every obstacle she meets. She is not without a tinge of shrewdness, but in her honest heart integrity predominates, and if it were only from interested motives, the Governess, having adopted teaching as a profession, must preserve her character unsullied to be able to secure at all times a situation. She is, on some points, rather punctilious: she takes great care not to be too familiar with the brothers and cousins of her pupils, but she is much pleased with the attentions of the old bachelor uncles. Thus, she sometimes enjoys the hope of marrying comfortably; but in her unsophisticated dreams she never thinks of accomplishing her object by any culpable intrigues.

The Governess is generally short, and rather stout, with a rosy, good natured, but common looking face. Her dress is neat, rather than elegant; brown is her favorite winter colour, and she wears pink in summer. She never buys more than two dresses and two bonnets a year. There is in her a spirit of economy verging on avarice—and this innate passion grows stronger with age. All her salary goes to the savings bank, and she gives only to her parents what she can spare from the presents she receives at Christmas, and on her birth-day.

When she is five-and-thirty, the Governess, whose savings bring her in a small income, marries a clerk in the post, or some Government office; she then becomes a prudent housekeeper, and if she have children, a severe and pedantic mother. When she makes up her mind to remain single, she purchases the good-will of a boarding-school, as one buys an attorney's business with his clients, and there she lords it the remainder of her days. Good living is then her pleasure, she has a puppy and a parrot which are her delights; she is incessantly tormenting both pupils and teachers, happy to inflict in her turn those petty persecutions which made her so long miserable.

Reader, have you ever noticed in some fashionable school, or in one of the royal establishments of the "Legion of Honour," at St. Denis, for instance, a pale young lady, pensive, ennuyée, tired of life at twenty, taking a solitary walk in some gloomy alley of the gardens, when the air is resounding with the bursts of joy of her young and happy companions? that pale girl, melancholy from disappointment than from real grief, is fated to belong to a peculiar class of governesses.

She is the daughter of a general in the army, or of some eminent contractor who made his fortune in the time of the Empire, and was ruined by the restoration; or, perhaps she is the unacknowledged child of a high personage, whom she has been taught to call her uncle. From her infancy she has been surrounded with wealth and splendour, and all the luxuries of high life have followed her to school; she could hardly speak when already she had jewels and trinkets, and was

waited upon by a "femme de chambre," who was made the slave of her tyrannical caprices; her health has been impaired by the most injudicious indulgence, and while she lived on sweatmeats, her mind was corrupted by reading fashionable novels, instead of books of a moral and wholesome tendency; and her heart before awakening to feeling, was spoiled by the excitement of artificial passion.

Thus has the child grown up, separated from her family, and spoiled by the dangerous indulgence of all sorts of luxuries; and when, after reaching eighteen, the poor girl already satiated with the enjoyment of balls, and pleasures of every description, which her companions only fancy in their dreams, expects to enter the world, and to play a prominent part among the ladies of fashion, she is one morning summoned into the presence of the scholmistress, who had until then treated her with the utmost respect, and there she is abruptly informed that the friends on whom she depended are either dead or ruined, and that she must forthwith think about procuring a situation;—she is told, as a consolation, that her talents are a sure resource which ought not to be neglected.

At this unexpected intelligence, the pale girl becomes still paler, but she remembers positions similar to her own in the novels she has read; she fancies herself a heroine, she sets bad fortune at defiance, and leaves with a tearless eye, and without regret, the happy home consecrated to careless youth, but where she has not lived in peace, for she has known no infantine joys, no pure hopes, no maidenly dreams, and her mind has been filled only with vanity and with ambitious aspirations now bitterly disappointed.

However, the world is open before her, she enters it readily—she is alone, poor, and without protection, but she is free, she has an adventurous spirit; her affected but graceful manners cannot fail to succeed in an affected world, and her languid beauty so well adapted to her destiny is sure to create sympathy, and command interest.

Of that brilliant society where but yesterday she expected to appear as a queen, she knows the wealthiest and the most powerful; long has she been their equal, she cannot now beg alms of them, but she will go to them as a ruined sister, and they will not allow her poverty to be exposed before people who are not of their rank. She is welcomed, sought after, all are anxious to befriend the young, beautiful, and mysterious victim. She is soon considered a superior being—she is proud, and receives nothing as a gift but as an exchange for the charm of her society. She becomes a companion to some great lady, with whom she lives on a footing of perfect equality. She is all elegance; her mind may be shallow, but her manners are most graceful, and through her feline caresses, you perceive a compound of pride and complaisance. She makes, peradventure, a great sensation in the world, and becomes the fashion; she is a sort of ornament that the mistress of a house is proud to parade like a costly piece of furniture, in her drawing-room. Her musical talents are great, and her execution most brilliant; when she sings she tosses up her head with an impassioned air;

and she attitudinizes like an actress. She has the same vanity, but she takes great care to conceal it. Could she but follow her natural bent, and were it not derogatory to her station, she would at once go on the stage. Her language is clothed in a kind of mystic poetry; she quotes Byron in English, and Klopstock in German; she affects to be entirely absorbed by *idealities*, whilst her mind tortured by disappointments, is wholly engaged by the real enjoyment of the material comforts, and luxuries of the world.

Her intuitive cleverness teaches her to direct her attacks against people of a soft and easy nature—the heirs presumptive to a great name and a large fortune —beardless boys whom the pale-faced young lady ensnares with her serpent-like seductions; or perhaps she will throw her baits at those acknowledged connoisseurs of female beauty, who during the time of the Empire have publicly made love to two or three celebrated women of the day, constant admirers of the fair sex, always ready to engage coolly and deliberately in some adventure, for the sake of still appearing young. But, when she fails in these intrigues she begins to feel, on reaching twenty-five, that she has lost the magical attraction excited by her coming out in the character of a youthful victim, and from a romantic companion she becomes an ambitious Governess.

She seeks then an engagement in some gay family, very little addicted to domestic life, whose house is thrown open to the world, and where children are educated at home, not that the improvement of their young minds and the culture of their hearts may receive more constant attention, but to train them up from their infancy to those conventional forms and stereotyped manners which are not implanted by nature, but are considered as exclusive characteristics of high breeding.

To the ambitious Governess, a pupil who has lost her mother is most acceptable, because she is submitted to no control but the authority of the father, whose watchful superintendence she transforms into personal attentions to herself. By degrees she thus assumes the power of the mistress of the house, indulges in the despotism of a temporary sovereignty, and even sometimes carries her point, and becomes the second wife of her pupil's father.

She is too much engrossed by her own views to bestow much care upon her pupil; she merely attends to her manners, whose elegance displayed in the drawing-room, reflects great credit upon herself. The docility of the young girl in this particular accomplishment, she rewards by many little indulgences, whose effect is for the present, to destroy the father's authority, and at a future period, the authority of the husband. The ambitious Governess dresses with great care; she wishes to be distinguished as a model for good taste and elegance; she is prodigal, for she always dreams of a forthcoming fortune. What use would it be to her to save money?—intrigue will provide for her.

When she reaches five-and-thirty without succeeding, despite her many contrivances, in catching a rich husband, she gives up the chance in despair, and

easily obtains the title of "*chanoinesse*." Under its protection she is welcomed in the fashionable world, where her peculiar abilities make her a fit agent for all sorts of elegant intrigues and secret negociations too often carried on in high life; at this period of her existence she becomes a desperate gamester.

But if the two characters we have just been describing are open to ridicule or censure, there is another which deserves our unmixed praise; we mean that young martyr—too often mistaken for one of the common governesses—who has lived happy in the bosom of her family, unconscious of the powers of her mind, and of her talents; and who, to save her friends from misfortune and misery, devotes herself readily, as a last resource, to the arduous duties of tuition. Fond as she is of the pleasures of home, she courageously leaves the paternal roof, where her kind and affectionate disposition has always been a comfort to every member of her family; not that she is unaware of all the troubles which await her among strangers, she has but too true forebodings of them,and she calls to her mind Dante's lines:—

Tu proverai siccome sa di sale
Lo pane altrui, e com' è duro calle
Lo scendere e 'l salir per l'altrui scale.

"Thou wilt then know how bitter is the stranger's bread, and how steep the steps of his house."

But she resigns herself to her fate, she must help her friends, and if in order to fulfil the duty that devolves upon her, she is obliged to silence her heart to repel the fancies of her imaginatiou, she will find consolation in her pure conscience.

She generally seeks to obtain an engagement in a family of honourable standing, commanding general respect for their good morals, their wealth, and all the outward signs of superiority; but yet, in these highly respected families may be found cold-hearted or even ill-tempered persons, with whom a daily intercourse must prove painful to her feelings. The noble families where she is admitted, are generally distinguished by a strict adherence to formal rules, and by a proud spirit of caste; and the poor girl who stands so much in need of a second home, and of kind attentions to console her for the loss of the tender cares by which she was surrounded at home, finds there only a polite and frigid hospitality. In her new position she commands respect by her unremitting attention to her duties; she receives well deserved praises, and at certains periods of the year she is regularly presented with elegant and costly gifts, all tokens of real esteem; but is not her young and noble heart in need of greater marks of affection? is that the happiness she has a right to expect? indeed, it is not enough for her to occupy an honourable position, to be able to assist, at times, her poor relations. Her soul yearns after the sympathy of kindred feelings to forget that she is a stranger in the family, to whom she has devoted her youth, her talents, and all the powers of her mind, and where she finds in return for such treasures a comfort-

able but a monotonous existence. Her services are paid with gold, but she never knows the blessings of sympathy, and the endearments of friendship.

Yet she accepts with resignation the destiny Providence has marked out for her. She began life with glowing hopes, and has met but with disappointments; still her heart is not withered, her imagination is ever young, she complains not, but buries her aspirations in the inmost recesses of her soul, as she feels all the bright illusions of her youth fade one by one. She has beauty, talents, and enthusiasm; had she remained with her own friends, she would have known the joys of love, but in that family where her misfortunes have thrown her, who is to love her? Is it the brother of her pupil, that impassioned young man, who is just beginning life, and feels unconsciously a strong interest for the youthful Governess? His gentle and almost involuntary attentions to her, his looks, his manners, have long told her that *he*, at least, does not consider her as a salaried inferior; but she is too proud to accept of a love that could only be a secret one; she feels that she deserves to be fairly and openly won; and the timid affection of that youth who turns pale at a reproachful look from his mother, who yields to her reflections on wealth and rank, cruelly made in the presence of the Governess, is to her only a new source of humiliation.

Many a time, her task appearing to her above her moral strength, she is tempted to return to her mother's caresses, to fly from that family where her talents are appreciated, where her services are of great value, but where no tears would be shed on her absence. Alas! she then remembers the poverty she has alleviated, the comforts she has bestowed on her parents by her exertions, and her pious sense of duty enables her in spite of her sufferings, to continue the struggle.

She is obliged to shape her intelligent and gifted mind into the narrow rules of elementary instruction; her poetic and lofty imagination must stoop to that of a child; her enlightened love of the Fine Arts may improve her pupil's taste, but she must forget its inspirations; she once thought of all the enjoyments of intellectual pursuits; now her soul is closed against them by the iron hand of adversity, and she can hardly believe any longer in happiness, that bright dream of her younger days. After the best years of her life have been spoiled of the joys of home, of the blessings of love, of the enthusiasm of happy youth, if she has yet a few members of her family, she returns to her old father, whose pride she is, or to her infirm mother whom she consoles by her tender cares; or, perhaps she goes to live with a younger married sister, whose children she considers as her own and cherishes like a mother.

Thus does she taste the semblance of those maternal joys whose reality she is obliged to renounce, but she is not ashamed of the name of old maid, for she also would have been a happy wife and mother had she not sacrificed her youth to her family's happiness, and had not her exemplary self-denial, the most heavenly of all human virtues, been the main spring of the actions of her whole life.



THE GAMIN.

BY JULES JANIN.



THE Parisian urchin, *(Gamin de Paris)* is brother to the "Grisette," legitimate or illegitimate brother, it matters little. He comes of a good race, for without doubt, his grandfather was at the storming of the Bastille. At the Revolution of 1830, his father was the first who entered the Tuileries, and took his seat on the throne. The Gamin belongs to a race of gentlemen whose genealogy is lost. But follow him in the streets; observe his proud looks, his bold carriage, his saucy smile, his little hands, his little feet, and his curly hair; these features belong to that little nation quite distinct from the whole French people, who since the establishment of monarchy have played the principal part in all the conflicts which have changed the face of the country. The Gamin could very well say with Figaro, "Had heaven permitted, I would be the son of a prince." That has not been granted by heaven; but our hero is much better than the son of a prince, he is the *Gamin* of Paris.

Whence does he come? What is his origin? Where is he going? One might just as well ask, whence came the sparrows that, without much ceremony, have taken possession of the finest places and most beautiful gardens of the capital; gay and impudent rogues which animate the already sprightly scene of the


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Palais Royal, and enliven the deserted walks of the Luxembourg. At the "Jardin des Plantes" they levy a tithe on the meals of the lions and the tigers—at the Tuileries they live upon the crumbs of the king's table, without enquiring what dynasty he belongs to. They shine neither by their plumage, their grace, their beauty, nor any of the qualities belonging to singing birds; but they are sprightly, intelligent, clear-sighted;—they are something better than bold—they are familiar. Verily I should not wonder if the sparrow and the Gamin had been in the same nest; and how *triste* would the metropolis be if deprived of these two kinds of chirpers!

As soon as he wakes, the Gamin is a prey to his two unconquerable passions—hunger and liberty. He must eat—he must go out. Give him at once a piece of bread, and let him enjoy the air. He is quickly dressed, all his costume consisting of a blouse. When he has immersed his head and hands in cold water, like a playful spaniel, his toilette is made for the day. His father takes little trouble about him, as he has been himself a Gamin, and well knows how Gamins are brought up; but his mother, in her double capacity of a Parisian and a mother, is jealous of the beauty of her son: she has always ready for him a clean shirt, a kiss, and some halfpence, and then, "Good bye, my son, you are free; take possession of the town, you are the master, the king of Paris; it is for you that the town is made, it must obey you." Woe to the countryman, to the citizen, to the ill-bred person, who would not acknowledge in the boy who passes by, the sovereign of this great city!

He, however, once set free, looks in which quarter sits the wind, and obeys his only master in the wind that blows. Do you hear his joyful little cry blended with the songs of yonder swallow? "O eh! O eh!" and to that victorious appeal every neighbouring echo immediately replies, "O eh! O eh!" It is the peculiar instinct of Parisian Gamins to recognize each other, to meet, to act in concert, and to walk in troops. It is written, "It is not meet for man to be alone;" and this sentence may be especially applied to the Gamin. When alone, he is dull—he loses his appetite—his hands are idle—his feet heavy; but as soon as the troop is formed, lo! each hand is alert—each foot light—each eye is quick—each breast expands, all the military instincts of these little people are at once awakened. Look here! behold the Gamin walking in step; he hears the drum, and he obeys the sound of the drum; the corporal smiles—the officer pats his cheek. As he goes on, if he is in good humour, nothing prevents him from entering some school—religious or Lancasterian it matters not, he has no prejudice. The lecture begins—the master gives explanation; but the Gamin has already understood all; he has the quickest, the most active and true intelligence in the world; he is always progressing, bright and rapid as lightning. Nothing astonishes him, and he learns so quickly that he seems only to recollect what he learns. Gamins have a slang word expressive of all sciences—political, physical, literary. When they have

said, "Known, known," their last word is spoken. Talk to them of Charlemagne and Louis the Fourteenth, "known, known;" explain how two and two make four, "known, known;" how the earth revolves round the sun, "known, known:" but if you happen to pronounce the name of Napoleon Bonaparte in their presence, immediately you see all their heads uncovered, and their smiling faces grow serious; they do not say, as before, "known, known," but listen with profound attention to every detail of that eventful history of modern times. The Gamin has a confused recollection of those glorious days when his race used to play so prominent a part: then they were sent barefoot to the frontier; armed only with guns in bad condition, they made the conquest of the world; every one of them was a hero, without being conscious of it; his knapsack was empty, it is true, but he was convinced that the staff of a marshall of France was contained in that empty knapsack.

Once at his regiment, the Gamin was there as much distinguished for his ready wit as for his courage; he was the lively spirit of the battle, the joy of the bivouac, the idol of the *Cantinières;* he laughed and made others laugh; he had in his special province all the wit of the army; he it was who originated those humourous sallies, those smart repartees, and those daring improvisations which used to charm the Emperor so much. "I know what you want," said he, one day, addressing Napoleon, "it is glory. You shall have plenty." It was only a Gamin of Paris who could say such things; this the Emperor well knew, and as he was acquainted with the least details in the army, he always knew in which regiment were to be found a good drummer, a good musical band, and a Gamin of Paris.

On entering the army the Gamin used to change his name; his comrades always called him "the Parisian." It is the same with the Parisian as with Champagne, you are sure to find him under all longitudes and latitudes, on earth, under it, and on sea. From him come all stories, all tales, all wonders. To hear him only talk, and to see his smiles, the crew forget hunger, thirst, and the scorching sun of the tropics. It is always with a peculiar grace that the Parisian throws at you his wit and his blows. He is the poet, the singer, and the general love-letter writer of the regiment; he is the spokesman in all deputations to the captain. He is the fencing-master, and the inventor of certain secret thrusts and guards that he teaches to all hands. He plays on the flageolet and Jew's harp, and imitates to perfection the dog, the cat, the mad flea, and other domestic animals. M. De Chateaubriand, in his travels on the banks of the Meschacébé, found a Gamin of Paris teaching the polished manners of the court of Louis the Fifteenth to the gentlemen savages and their ladies. He flourishes in all climates, and accommodates himself to all sorts of livings and to all fortunes. He is brave, vain, a braggart story teller, and as bold and impertinent as a page; his eloquence is indefatigable, inexhaustible. A large dose of philosophy, and a rare patience, blended with the most complete

improvidence in all human affairs, and a natural feeling of honesty and duty, compose the character of this singular personage, to whom no one can be compared in any country in the world.

But to return to *our* Gamin. We left him at school, learning in great haste the first rudiments of science, or rather guessing all its details. As soon as the lecture is over, and when he has received on his little fingers his due allowance of lashes, generally reduced by the ferula being broken to pieces, through a trick known only to himself, he exclaims that the time is come for play. He puts his book into his pocket—if he have a book—and runs away to one of his favourite haunts, the Chateau d'Eau, for instance, the most beautiful spot in the metropolis. Then, while the water falls with a monotonous murmur into the stone basin of the fountain, under the shade of the trees on the Boulevart, not far from the odoriferous smoke of street kitchens in open air, our hero plays on a cork all his day's fortune. Make room for him, disturb him not, and do not put yourselves in the way of his sun, as he would soon say as Diogenes to Alexander, " Get out of my light." But nothing prevents you from looking at him; the Gamin does not mind that, and his sense of justice makes him admit that other people have an equal right with himself to the privilege he enjoys so freely.

So he plays, and it is wonderful how light and expert his hand is; by an inexplicable fatality, he ever wins; it is one of the mysteries which surround this singular personage. When he has pocketed the money, he buys a bag of fried potatoes, and proceeds to eat them under the eyes of the passengers, whom he regards with sublime indifference. His meal over, if he have time he will spell through the printed paper of which the bag is made, and three times out of four it will be part of an old *Constitutionnel*, that will inspire him with the hatred of tyrants and the love of the people. He feels thirsty, and throwing himself back against the cascade, receives the refreshing water in his wide open mouth, well furnished with teeth white as a young dog's. After this, our Gamin will remember that he has somewhere a master or a principal, and that he has a duty to perform. Then you may see him running away till he is out of breath—not that he is afraid of being beaten or discharged, for no one ever thinks of beating or discharging the Gamin; but somehow he has an instinctive love for his master: only he loves him after his own fashion, and when he has nothing else to do.

Does any ask what is the Gamin's occupation? Ask rather what it is not, and to what he is incapable of turning his hand during his life. He is in possession of the grand arcana. He knows everything, can do everything; more than this he does not know, but this he knows perfectly well. He is a blacksmith, that is to say, he plies the bellows; he is a painter, and grinds the colours; a boot maker—and waxes the thread; a builder—he mixes the plaster; a printer—he washes the forms; a royal notary—he is the most active agent in all transactions.

he it is who carries from one office to another deeds by which the largest estates, change masters, treaties of alliance between the first families of the land; sometimes he passes you in the street, carrying a large fortune with him, and his step is not the more heavy for it. But of all trades in which the Gamin is engaged from the first to the last step of the social scale, there is not one for which he has more vocation than the literary profession.

Observe him proudly wearing a paper cocked hat, and carrying under his arm, in his pocket, grave histories, gay novels, comedies in prose, tragedies in verse. He is the intelligent and devoted postman of the literary penny post, the courier of the drama, the messenger of poets; it is his fortune to enjoy the first fruits of every thought old or new. He was the first to know that Niebuhr had left out the first seven kings of Rome; that M. Augustin Thierry had discovered several kings of the name of Clovis; no one was informed before him that M. Salvandy was writing a history of Napoleon, and he has found out that the style of that history was too fine. One evening, when he came home, he recited to his father's spaniel the beautiful verses not as yet published then, addressed by M. de Lamartine, in his *Joselyn*, to his pretty dog Fido. How many times has he carried in the same pocket two political leaders, pro and contra the same minister! and he, trusting to his good sense alone, remained immovable between these two furious declamations.

Our young literary brother, with a most consummate skill, gives to every one his proper place, more just, in that respect, than all the journalists in the world. One day he arrived out of breath at M. Chateaubriand's house, most anxious to see that popular and eloquent man. The little fellow had ran in a minute through that long street leading to the top of the hill where the great poet was then living. He enters the house, is introduced at once into the presence of M. De Chateaubriand, and is overpowered as if it were the Emperor Napoleon himself. In spite of his usual boldness, all his composure deserts him. "Sir," says he, "I have brought you a proof." But the proof is nowhere to be found; his coat pockets were stuffed with articles for reviews, and novels by De Kock; in his breast pocket was deposited a classical tragedy; he carried under his arms pressed against one another, a drama of the new school and a vaudeville of M. Scribe; his cap was crammed with prose and verse, but in that general medley of every day writings, M. De Chateaubriand's prose was not to be found. The child was in despair, and his beautiful face bore the expression of unaffected grief. "Come, never mind, my boy, I suppose you must have lost the proof by the way." At these words the boy regained all his composure. "Here it is! here it is, sir!" exclaimed he, drawing the proof from under his waistcoat where he had deposited it next his heart, apart from the trash he had about him, and presenting it to M. De Chateaubriand. The author of *The Génie du Christianisme* has since declared that he was more affected by this simple and true homage than by all the praise received from every part of the globe. He

proffered his hand to the child, who kissed it. But the Gamin has been long accustomed to treat with due reverence this popular glory. On the last day of the Revolution of 1830, when he was returning from the Louvre where he left untouched all the riches there collected, he it was who recognized the great royalist and religious poet threading his way through the barricades, and making enquiries for his king. A simultaneous "hurrah!" burst from all the Gamins, who instantly bore away in triumph the most eminent member of the defeated party. All the hearers of that shout believed that the king of the Revolution was passing. It was a greater man.

It is more particularly in such days of revolution, when all order is upset, that the Parisian Gamin shews himself all alive, and is ever agitated by the spirit of revolt. He acknowledges no law; knows no restraint. He has no master, no father, no mother. The old insubordinate spirit of the Ligue, of the Barricades, of 1789, again appears in 1814, and 1830; and one could almost believe that the same Gamin has been exciting the Parisians into a state of revolt ever since the days of Pharamond. The smell of powder intoxicates him, the cannon's roar makes him caper with joy. He always sides with the weaker party against the stronger, with the people against the soldiery. A shower of musket balls he returns with a shower of stones, and the whiz of a cannon ball disturbs him no more than a thirty years campaigner. If his cap should be knocked off in the *melée*, he boldly scrambles after it under the horses' feet, to save a scolding from his mother on his return home. Nothing daunts this sturdy little dog, and he really performs wonders. He creeps into the midst of armed battallions, or climbs up behind a galloping hussar; or coolly sits astride a cannon in full play. The deadly bullets seem to know and avoid him; no soldier would touch him with his bayonet, for fear of murdering his brother or his son; and in the desperate conflicts that decide the fate of empires, the Gamin only beholds a fine opportunity for playing truant from his school, or his shop, and having "a game of soldiers."

Do not our young hero the injustice to think, that in all the confusion of Three Glorious Days, he would steal an apple or a stick of barley-sugar. Even the pastry-cooks' shops are sacred to him. He only wishes to force the royal palace, *to seat himself on the throne*, and affront all authority human and divine. If he sees an enemy fall mortally wounded, the Gamin's headstrong fit deserts him, and with his own little hands he binds up his wounds. But if, after he has been triumphantly desecrating the throne in the Tuileries, or sacrilegiously demolishing the Archbishop's palace, his mother scolds him on his return home, and calls him to account for the loss of his pocket-handkerchief or cap, our truant hero, our dethroner of kings, our defiler of altars, quietly takes a beating from his mother, and whimperingly solicits her pardon and a kiss.

Amiable child! We love him better in his ragged and savage sincerity than those affected little gentlemen pompously paraded by their nurses in the public

gardens. Courage, candour, and indifference are engrafted in his nature. No one knows so well as he how to be content with little, the great secret of wisdom and happiness. He plays almost unconsciously a prominent part in every political struggle and insurrection of which Paris is so often the theatre; and accepts no other reward for his share in the danger and active and intelligent co-operation, than a foremost place among the spectators of the procession of the new king he has just assisted to the throne.

The Gamin knows every quarter of Paris, is familiar with every street, every passage; he has most accurately surveyed its fauxbourgs, its quays, and thoroughfares; he has a dozen times made the ascent of the column of the Place Vendome; he has threaded every avenue of the Catacombs, and knows the Seine, Champ de Mars and the Park of St. Cloud as well as he does his coat pocket. But no part of the town is better known to the Gamin than the riverside. On the banks of the Seine he is as happy as a fish in water, and frequent are the visits he pays the laundresses in their washing boats. He never allows a fishing party to escape him, nor a minnow to be caught without his permission.

Vainly in the dog days the gendarme threatens to take the Gamin's clothes to the police station, if he persists in swimming naked in the most frequented part of the river. The Gamin laughs in the gendarme's face; between them there is the most cordial understanding. If the gendarme should take the Gamin's clothes, of what do they consist? He has scarcely any. Naked and *not ashamed*, with his hands crossed behind him à la Napoleon, he perambulates every eyott on the Seine.

In winter the Gamin slides on the frozen surface of the beloved stream, where he takes his bath in summer.

Sometimes he determines on an aquatic excursion, and climbs over the side of the first boat going down the river; thus he gains Rouen, then Havre and the open sea. Once at Havre, he enters on shipboard, and follows the sea as his trade. Fair weather attend him on his first voyage! For a whole week he is sought after and enquired for; his mother mourns his loss, till the advent of another Gamin makes her dry her eyes.

Days of public rejoicings were, till of late years, his grand days. The news of every victory of the French army was marked by a public distribution of sweetmeats, quartern loaves, sausages and wine, of which the Gamin always had the lion's share. Taking precedence of the army, he was king of the fête, and not unjustly, for by whom were the ranks of the Imperial Guard recruited, if not by Gamins of Paris?

Alack the day, our poor hero has now lost a great part of his joys! Under the pretext of a more discriminate charity, provisions and wine are no longer distributed. Nor is this all. The royal theatres are never thrown open to the Gamins of Paris, who may no more instal themselves in the boxes, and hiss Mars or Talma at will. Blind policy of the *branche cadette*! The Gamin

of Paris is all powerful, and 'twere better not to offend him, nor too soon forget his services in July.

But though, on these grand fête days, the Theatre Français and the Opera, are closed against the Gamin, he is still sole master of all the minor theatres, the Porte St. Martin, the Gaité, the Ambigu Comique, and the Salon de Curtius. At the Porte St. Martin, he applauded M. Hugo's early dramatic productions, but he really thought there were too many horrors in Lucrèce Borgia; at the Gaité, he gave himself up wholly to M. Pixérécourt, the Corneille of the boulevarts. The Gamin mourned the death of Victor Ducange the melodramatist, the object of his liveliest sympathy.

The Gamin largely contributed to the fortune of Debureau (the French Grimaldi). To entertain the Gamin, Madame Saqui has a thousand times nearly broken her neck, and the Cirque Olympique nightly exercises its well-trained stud; there the Gamin evokes the manes of the Emperor and the *grande armée*, which defile before him in warlike array to the sound of drum and trumpet, on the mimic battle field.

Another of the Gamin's enjoyments is the Court of Assize, where he seldom lets a deeply interesting or bloody case escape him. Endowed by nature with the most acute penetration, the weak and strong points of the accusation and defence he appreciates with the nicest discrimination. With earnest and watchful attention he listens to the attorney-general's opening speech, the evidence of every witness and the pleas of the prosecutor's and prisoner's counsel. It seems incredible that he can be the same child who a few hours ago darted from his mother's home to join a group of giddy playfellows, or who overnight helped to damn the new melodrama at the Ambigu. With staid and solemn gravity he hears the whole case, nor ever fails to volunteer to his neighbour a conscientious verdict of his own. A special jury of Gamins would nine times out of ten return a *true* verdict. Thoughtless and hair-brained as he looks, he holds crime in abhorrence, and the sight of a murderer terrifies him; larceny he might look over, but the housebreaker would receive no mercy at his hands. Having brought in his verdict against the prisoner, he witnesses in person the infliction of the judge's sentence; he follows him to prison, to the pillory, nay to the foot of the scaffold, and coolly beholds justice done.

Singular child! he warbles his merriest ditties on his way to the Morgue, nor discontinues them in the presence of the corpse of one of his companions run over a few hours ago by a carriage in the street. To save himself from a similar fate, the Gamin climbs behind the first carriage that passes him, and threats and blows with the driver's whip are equally unavailing to make him quit his place. The carriage and horses are his; he urges them with his voice and his gesture; but they do not go fast enough for him, and he resolves not to keep his coachman.

Such is the life of the little vagabond in the French metropolis. His character is a strange compound of vices and virtues, faults and good qualities, carelessness and courage, cunning and candour. Truly the Gamin of Paris, with his unconquerable independence, his noble heart, his volatility, his malice without bitterness, and his innate vanity, is not an unfair specimen of the French national character.



CAPTAIN PIDDING'S TEAS.

The accounts lately received from Macao, bringing intelligence of the English having been totally expelled from China, and hostilities having actually commenced between Her Majesty's forces, directed by Her Superintendant in person, and Chinese men of war; in other words, China being at war with England on questions of such difficult adjustment as to render it almost impossible, and certainly improbable, that any more tea can arrive from that country for a considerable period, a great rise in all descriptions of that article has taken place. Since June last, common black teas have risen 1s. 9d., and fine green 3s., per lb. Fine Hyson, with duty, fetched at the late public Sales, 9s. 7d. per lb; fine black teas as high as 6s. 7d., whilst up to this moment, Captain Pidding has continued to allow his teas to be sold without any advance whatever. The late great rise, however, having caused a run upon his teas by the trade, who found that they could purchase them cheaper retail, than they could buy inferior teas wholesale, he is compelled to raise the price to prevent his remaining stock being purchased by tea dealers. For the present, CAPTAIN PIDDING'S HOWQUA'S MIXTURE will be sold at the rate of 6s. 9d. per lb., being 9s. the catty, or an advance of only 9d. per lb., when the commonest teas, since June, have advanced 1s. 9d. per lb. HOWQUA'S SMALL LEAF GUNPOWDER will be sold for the present, at 9s. 9d. per lb., when even Hyson, an inferior tea, is fetching, wholesale, 9s. 7d. per lb.; Half and Quarter catties in like proportion.

Captain Pidding thinks it right to inform the public that his Chinese correspondent states confidently, that there is no probability of the trade opening with that country, for, at the least, twelve months; and as the entire stock of consumable tea in Great Britain will be exhausted before that period, there is little doubt but tea will advance daily.—January, 1840.

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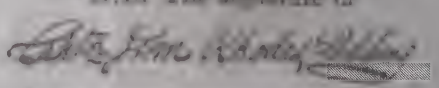
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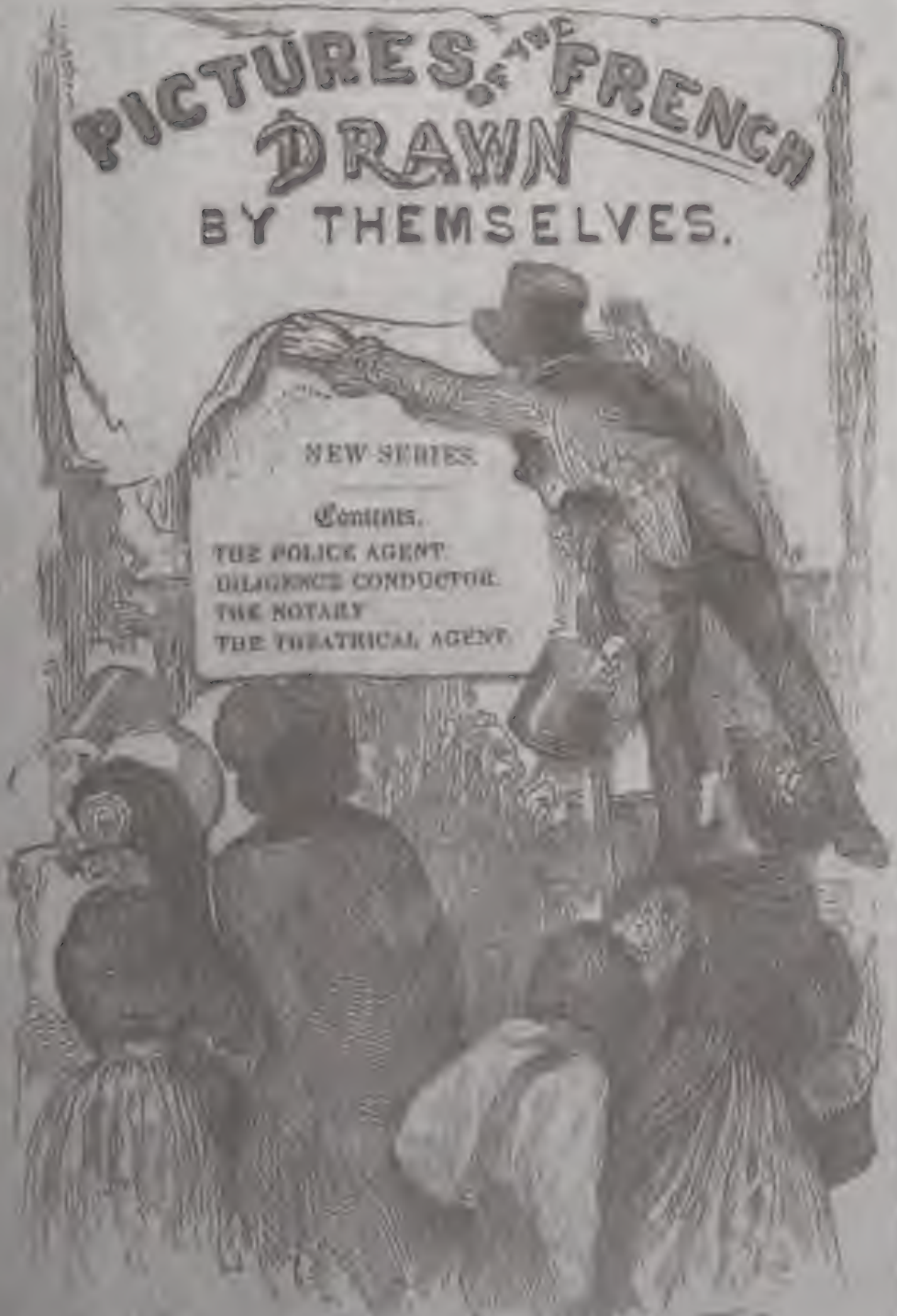
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THE POLICE AGENT.

BY ARMAND DURANTIN.



"THE world's a stage, life a play, and all the men and women merely players." Nothing can be more true. Everybody here below plays a part with more or less skill and assurance.

Real comedy—not your stage play, but the drama of life—is played in those perilous situations in which each actor strives his utmost for his adversary's ground, in those crises in which every spectator takes a part—the more energetic and impassioned, because his liberty, existence, or honour is at stake. This is not a fiction, as on the boards, but a question of positive interest. But if there is much comedy in the world, there are very few comedians. However, between the wife who so skilfully plays a part to deceive her husband, and the courtier's pliant genius, naturally comes a class of men whose name is well known to the public, but whose manners, habits, and diplomatic address almost defy observation—a remarkable type in French society, but a type varied to infinity: we mean, the POLICE AGENT.

We have already observed that every one is acquainted with his name, but very few have studied his position We do not speak of the *garde municipal*, who belongs to a regular body of troops; nor the policeman, the zealous pro-

tector of public peace and morals, who would not scruple to take Fanny Elsler herself into custody, if she were ever to venture to dance the cachucha under the shade of the Chaumière, or in the Tivoli gardens. But there exists a peculiar class of Agents who eschew scrutiny, and are almost impenetrable to the common observer—in short, the *secret* Agents, whose mysterious proceedings we have been watching, in order to bring them to light in this gallery.

In truth, the notions generally entertained of the organization of the police, are singular enough. Many worthy citizens firmly believe that there is no street, passage, public walk, or assembly, that is not crowded with secret Police Agents, and thieves no less numerous. With respect to thieves, we do not say nay; but, certainly, the number of Agents is limited enough:—only they know how to multiply themselves with so much address, that one alone would, in a case of great urgency, be enough to watch over Paris.

The police, as organised in France, is either preventive or repressive. Charged with the regular maintenance of public order, it is its first duty to prevent all crime; and no doubt this accounts for our oft recurring riots, and for the fact, that the citizens of Paris nightly run the risk of assassination on their way home. The next duty of the police is to detect offenders after the actual commission of crimes, and arrest them when it is too late to prevent the perpetration of their offences. Numerous and most varied are the objects within the jurisdiction of the municipal police in Paris: the surveillance of the Exchange, theatres, and all public places: fires, public liberty and safety, licences, are all under its immediate care; passports, vagabondage, mendicity, itinerant musicians, rope-dancers, and other buffoons, (excepting, of course, those at court,) belong to its department, as also the inspection of prisons, and all houses of bad repute.

The Prefect of police has under his authority the police officers, who in the year IV. of the Republic bore in their hands a white staff with the inscription, "Force à la loi," and an *eye* painted on the handle, as an indication of their functions. Later, on the nineteenth nivôse of the year X, their costume was changed; they had a blue coat, with collar and linings of red, red waistcoat and breeches, in lieu of their former Robespierrian costume. The collar and cuffs were bordered with narrow silver lace; a three cornered hat with binding of silver lace, buttons bearing the word "Peace," and a sword suspended to a belt worn over the right shoulder, completed an uniform which in our days would attract a mob of little children, as in the merry time of the carnival. Alas! how have the police fallen! An ignoble great coat, of any or no colour, has superseded the elegant uniform, a blue scarf being now their only insignia.

There is in Paris a special police commissioner for each quarter, besides one for the Exchange, the sewers of the metropolis, the inspectors of the halls and market places, and of the quays. They are all under the immediate orders of the Prefect of police, as well as all the armed force, the municipal guard, and three brigades of policemen.

There is a prevalent opinion in France, that an indispensable qualification to be a Police Agent is to have been a thief: this is a grievous error. No more than six years ago, it was too often the case; but since then, black has become white, and the Police Agent has been purified. Now-a-days, it is very difficult to obtain admission into the police; more skill and honesty are required than for any other government office. The candidate for this wretched situation is scrupulously examined touching his past and present life, and in the most trifling actions of his private existence. If he has committed any misdemeanour, he is refused; if he should be betrayed into one while in office, his ignominious expulsion straight ensues. No one can, after these explanations, pretend, that the Police Agents in Paris are a set of scamps.

True it is that, in Vidocq's time, old thieves were commissioned to insinuate themselves into the company of their quondam associates, to learn their projects, too often to encourage their execution, and then to denounce them. But it is so no longer. Thirty-two Agents alone have the surveillance of the French metropolis, and the care of the safety of its inhabitants. They are mostly chosen from among those unfortunates who, having no other employment or resources, are compelled to accept a wretched situation, of which most of them are ashamed. Doubtless this is an amelioration of the moral condition of the Police, but it is perhaps an evil; for those men who are unskilled in the trade, who are unacquainted with the tricks of the thief's profession, who cannot associate with robbers, are more likely to let delinquents escape than their predecessors, who had daily intercourse with bad characters, followed them in their nocturnal depredations, and to their secret haunts, and watched and denounced them in time to prevent the perpetration of intended crimes. The Police have indeed, appreciated the inefficiency of the Agents, and are occasionally obliged to employ men of a different stamp, who are not strictly in their pay, but who perform the same duties as the ancient companions of Vidocq. This class of spies, composed of known thieves, and men who have already been convicted, establish an intercourse with the Police Agents, and although they do not entirely renounce their unlawful practices, clandestinely give information that often leads to the discovery of crime. Their number is unlimited; they generally meet at wine shops, taking care to place a scout at the door to keep watch.

The secret Police Agents begin their operations in Paris early in the day. Some are charged with the inspection of pickpockets, others with the apprehension of shoplifters. For this service the Agent disguises himself as a workman, dandy, or what not. The features of this class of thieves are known to him, and not a day passes that he does not detect one or more in *flagrante delicto*, in spite of their artful evasions. Others have in their province to proceed under the superintendance of their chief, M. Allard, to effect the dangerous arrest of housebreakers and murderers. When a man is suspected of having committed murder on the highway, the chief of the brigade of safety gives instructions to

the sixteen inspectors of lodging-houses in Paris, and these make enquiries about the haunts of the accused parties. The steps of the latter are dogged, every attempt is made to discover where they passed the night of the crime, and if circumstances corroborate the suspicion, they are immediately taken into custody, and placed in confinement.

The Agents receive eight francs per arrest; but out of these eight francs they have to pay *their* informants. Moreover the higher officials levy a mulct upon the paltry remainder, so that the Agent pockets a few sous only of his premium. Yet it is well known that the duties of the police are efficiently discharged; and though it is impossible to prevent every crime, few are left unpunished. But the number of Agents is too limited. Certainly many are employed for political purposes, but they are quite distinct from the police of safety, whose numbers are far too small, and it is dreadful to think that from four till six, in the afternoon, there is not a single Agent on duty in Paris. It would be too much to expect the whole force to be always on the alert; but at least one half should relieve the other.

The brigade of safety nightly provides a certain number of policemen for every street. After midnight they may be seen enveloped in their grey great coats, stealthily gliding about like demons in the darkness, never more than six under the command of an orderly, and at the slightest sound, hastening to protect the citizens. A few years ago, the grey band were armed for their nightly rounds with dagger knives, which have since been suppressed; and the principal business now is to save the lives of drunkards by dragging them out of the street gutters, where they would perish with cold, if they escaped being run over.

The Police Agent's private life is a painful one; his position in society is as wretched and humiliating as crime itself. Shut up in his narrow cell, appropriately called a "snuff-box," separated from the world by an insurmountable barrier, repulsed by all with disgust as a spy, isolated by his peculiar position, the Agent is alone, often without family, without friends, without social ties, without self-esteem, and always overwhelmed by the consciousness of his degraded employment. Shame and infamy stare him in the face, society disowns and banishes him, and with his wretched wages he receives the contempt of his hirers. He is a Police Agent, a spy, and that is enough: the warrant in his pocket is a patent of ignominy. Paris is to him a pillory, in which he is incessantly exposed. Even thieves would be ashamed of his company, and never mention his name without contempt.

What grief, shame, and misery are in store for him when having served his time, he again becomes a citizen of the town he has protected from pillage, yet in which he is hated and despised, even more than thieves themselves! With what bitter and burning tears must he bathe his miserable pallet when he reflects on the opprobrium into which misery has plunged him, of the infamous livery he so long wore! Fortunately he is little addicted to reflection.

The Police Agent is not very conversant with the usages of good society, nor is he there treated with respect by his superiors, as the following anecdote will testify. The head of a department entertained several important personages; the invitations included a secret Agent, from whom information was required. Uneasy in such good company, the Agent was unable to conceal his embarrassment. He was particularly puzzled by the sight of the little silver spoon on each saltceller, and could not divine the use of an instrument apparently so superfluous. Wishing to help himself to some salt, our humble guest removed the saltspoon, and coolly plunged his finger and thumb into the saltceller; he then carefully replaced the mysterious instrument. The master of the house observing a sneer on the countenances of his guests, turned to the secret Agent, and complimented him on his renowned skill in capturing thieves. Gratified by this notice, the Agent related some of his feats, and asserted that no thief could escape him.

"Are you so ready at tracking?" asked the functionary.

"As a poacher after game," answered the Agent.

"Then can you tell me," pointing to the saltceller, "what animal has passed there."

Yet the Police Agent has a good deal of learning. He knows all languages, and, according to circumstances, he could arrest you in French, English, Italian, or German, and would make himself understood in Chinese, if he had to capture a mandarin. He is a very chameleon for changing at will, colour, tone, and manners. The world is his native country; he has neither friends nor relatives, and would, if need were, arrest himself. Seven towns assert that Homer was born within their walls; an equal number would rise to disown the Police Agent, if there were the slightest suspicion of one of them being his birthplace. He is of any age or of none; he has names without number, and is never known twice by the same. To-day he has riches, honours, a title and the ribbon of an order; to-morrow he will wear a blouse, and smoke a clay pipe. He knows everything, sees everything, and is everywhere at once. With one ear he listens to the instructions of his principal in the Rue de Jerusalem, while with the other he overhears the conference of certain conspirators in a garret in some obscure faubourg. In the first days of the Republic he frequented the clubs with his chin immersed in the folds of a large red scarf; when France was ruled by the Directory, he played deep in the salons of the Faubourg St. Germain. Then came the Empire, and he acted as spy alike upon the royalists and republicans. Governments changed; but not the Agent. The suspected party of one day was in power the next; and the Agent many a time received his orders from those who a few days before were under his surveillance. After the restoration, decorated with orders and noble titles *ad lib.*, he acted as a spy towards the Bonapartists who could no longer reward his services. At a later period, after the revolution of 1830, he insinuated himself into secret societies

composed of the most inveterate enemies of the government, and gave the first signal of the *emeutes*. We saw one called as a witness before the court of assize, impudently reply to the judge, who was ignorant of his position, and boldly provoke an uproar, knowing that he would be supported. This Agent was a more violent *bonnet rouge* than the wretches whom he had denounced.

There are dandies of the profession, charged with important operations, and certain captures that require more intelligence and cunning than force and courage. Not a day passes that you do not elbow one of them in the street; and often at the theatre, your amiable and obliging neighbour, who converses with such good taste on all the trifling topics of the day, is no other than an Agent of the Rue de Jerusalem come to feel political pulses, or watch the proceedings of a notorious member of the swell mob.

The Police Agent has a wonderful faculty, for every metamorphosis. The man who a few minutes ago, appeared so rough and ill bred, can in a twinkling assume the most elegant manners. This reminds me of a curious scene at which I was present a few summers ago in an Hotel, at Cauterêts, when I myself was completely duped by a Police Agent.

I dined that day at the *table d'hôte*, and by my side sate a charming young Parisian lady. A stout old gentleman was tying a napkin round his little boy's neck, while his wife endeavoured to cut something eatable off the lean skeleton of duck sent her by the young man at the head of the table. My attention was naturally attracted by the carver, who at a *table d'hôte* is too important a personage to be neglected. I observed him closely.

He was rather a good looking young man of about five-and-twenty; his black hair was artistically curled; he wore a small moustache, and his countenance had a very pleasing expression.

The next day, I learned that the fair traveller had been to visit the waters of Cauterêts, and that not daring to venture alone, she had accepted the young dandy's arm.

For some time they walked on in silence beneath the avenue of elms, and were bending their steps towards a neighbouring village, when a post-chaise that was rapidly passing them stopped on a signal from the young man.

"What are you going to do?" asked the fair traveller.

"Surprise you agreeably," answered the young man, laughing. "Step in, walking is weary work, and for me this journey will be most delightful."

"Sir, you are too gallant."

"No one can be gallant enough for so fair a lady," returned her companion, carrying her unresisting hand to his lips.

"Come," said she, laughing, I abandon myself to your care. "What should I have done," she added, in a tender voice, "if I had not met you? I must have died of ennui! You are certainly my good genius.

The young man smiled, and made no answer. Meanwhile, the post-chaise

drove rapidly onwards; and an animated conversation soon ensued between the travellers.

"Where are we going?" exclaimed the young lady. "This is surely the high road. Postilion! Postilion!"

The young man did not reply; he no longer even smiled.

"Sir, this conduct is infamous," cried the young lady in a voice of terror. "Where are we going? Whither are you carrying me?"

"To Paris, my love."

"What do I hear?"

"That, so far from being your good genius, I am, on the contrary, commissioned to conduct you, first to the Rue de Jerusalem, and thence to prison."

"There must be some mistake, Sir."

"Oh dear no, not at all; I never make mistakes. You are Emma Popply. What! don't you remember Rigody?" So saying, the handsome young fellow slowly took off his jet black wig, which concealed a short crop of bright vermillion; removed the false beard and moustache that graced his bald chin and lip; and having carefully bestowed them in his great coat pocket, he coolly proceeded to fill and light a common red clay tobacco-pipe, humming snatches of Brandhofen all the while.

The chaise still drove at great speed, to the great dismay of one of its occupants. Having exhausted tears and threats, she had recourse to cajoleries, and these failing, tried an hysterical fit. But all were alike unsuccessful; nothing could disturb the equanimity of the Agent, who with the utmost unconcern watched the volumes of smoke ascend to the roof of the chaise.

"Sir, your conduct is cowardly and beneath contempt, thus to inveigle a poor defenceless woman!" said Emma, almost bursting with rage.

"You are a charming companion," said the Agent, removing his pipe, and kissing her hand with mock respect.

"This insolence is not to be borne," said the irritated fair one, smartly boxing her tormentor's ears.

"You were more amiable a few minutes ago," answered Rigody, still unmoved.

"Let me go," said she, after a few minutes hesitation, "and I promise you"—

"Go on."—

"All you can ask."

"What do you mean?"

"Two-thirds of all I possess, jewels, gold, and notes."

"No, the thing's impossible."

"Suppose I consent to be yours."

"You have just made me a better offer," said the youngman.

"Brute," cried the mortified lady, relapsing into a silence that was unbroken till, three days afterwards, the post-chaise stopped before the hotel in the Rue de

Jerusalem. The entrapped lady was handed out by her fellow traveller, and taken charge of by two policemen, who immediately closed the iron gates behind her.

I returned to Paris, and had entirely forgotten the two travellers, when one evening, about two months afterwards, whom should I meet at a party but my handsome hero of the glossy black hair, beard, and moustache. Having returned his bow, I enquired how matters stood between him and his conquest.

"Which?" asked he, "Ah! I remember. A young girl, rather pretty?" "The same. You carried her off, lucky fellow, that you are!"

"Carried off! No, indeed; I only took her to the prefecture of police. If you consult the register, you will find this entry:—'June 3, 1832. Emma Popply, aged twenty-two, accused of purloining diamonds and cachmeres. Placed in confinement at five o'clock this day.'"

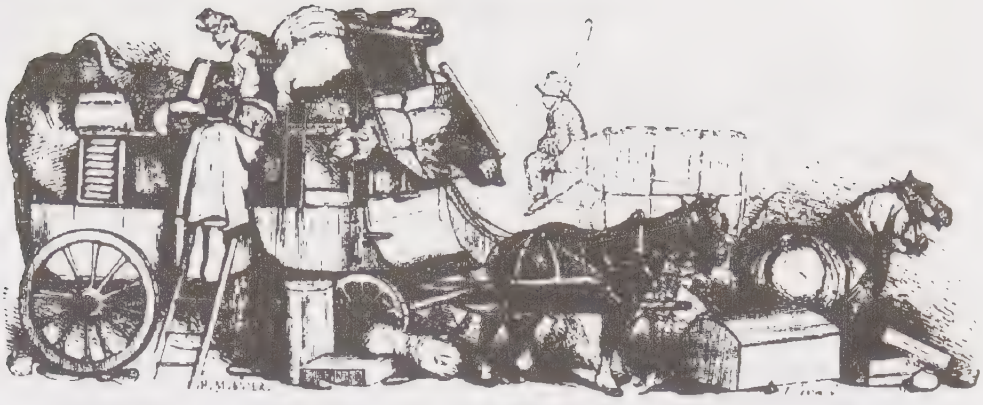
"Why, who are you?" said I, in astonishment.

While I spoke, an old gentleman stopped near me, and stared hard at the young dandy; who, instead of answering me, changed colour, and turning on his heel, disappeared in the crowd.

"Sir, can you tell me who that young man is?" said I, turning towards the old gentleman, with whom I was slightly acquainted.

"A secret Agent of police," was the answer. "Some months ago I was his dupe in a political affair, in which he played the part of accomplice to act as spy against us. Every time he sees me, he instantly retreats. Whenever you chance to meet the fellow, do not fear to unmask him openly, Sir, as I have just done to you."





THE DILIGENCE CONDUCTOR.

BY JOSEPH HILPERT.



CONDEMNED to the difficult task of continually catering for novelty, the writers for the press and the theatres seek for subjects in all classes of society. There are no places, however high, or however obscure,—boudoirs, garrets, palaces, or hovels, that are sacred from their bold intrusion: and their analysis of all varieties of human nature extends to the most minute details. One type only seems hitherto to have escaped their scrutiny. Whether from contempt or forgetfulness we cannot affirm; we only know that such is the fact, that an inedited individual still exists, that he is at this moment close to us, and reduced to solicit at our hands his share of public notice. Poor Diligence Conductor!!

And yet it is to him that authors and vaudevillistes owe the enjoyment of the choicest foreign produce, the unacknowledged source of many of their works. First and foremost he brings them the soothing cigar,

"Dont la blanche fumée
Fait naître la pensée."

And to him they are indebted for the delicacies from Strasbourg and Toulouse, Ostend, and Perigueux, those dainty additions to their epicurean repasts.

Through him barren winter is decked in the riches of summer; the interval between spring, summer, and autumn disappears. And when at convivial meetings the jest flags, and the laugh is expiring, what gives a fresh impulse to the wit and gaiety, but the sparkling Champagne and the delicate Burgundy brought from Ay and Chambertin, by the faithful Conductor?

And the friend whom they expect, and the wife whom they are so impatient to press again to their heart, who will restore them to their love? To whom for whole days and nights together are the lives of all they hold most dear blindly confided? To the Diligence Conductor. Yet they do not appreciate him; they have given the preference to the postilion, who is the mere executor of his instructions. They have already brought him triumphantly on the stage; they have reserved the sweetest perfumes, the most flexible roulades to do him honour, they have refused no laurel to his glory, and his praises are sung every day in the harmonious accents of the street organ! They have done everything for him, and said everything of him—except the truth.

Here will begin the Conductor's vengeance. His faithful portrait will shame them for their neglect and disdain.

The conductor has many points of resemblance with the hussar. They have the same consciousness of superiority, the same spirit of insubordination, the same coquetry in their dress; there is not a lass at an inn, or a farm on the road, whose heart, being more or less susceptible, can resist the Conductor, who like the hussar, seems to be gifted by nature with the power of attraction.

They are both, it is true, under a severe discipline; they are subjected to a passive obedience towards their superiors, from the colonel to the corporal, from the proprietor to the clerk of the coach-office. The hussar has the difficult duty of keeping his equipment in order, the conductor has the care of his tools, such as knife, hatchet, chain, and cord, with which he must always be provided in case of accidents. For each are made unbending and inexorable regulations, and both are liable to severe punishment: the soldier when found in fault, has extra duties to perform, or is ordered to prison; the Diligence conductor is suspended, or condemned to pay fines, rapidly increasing from five francs to five hundred.

These are sharp thorns in their path, but they are not felt at first, and remain some time concealed by the flowers scattered over them.

Is there, in fact, anything more fascinating than the curled moustachio, the handsome jacket, and the sky-blue cap of the hussar? Is anything more becoming than the stylish cap, or the embroidered collar, where gold, silver, and bright coloured silks seem to vie with each other in setting off the Conductor? And then his money-bag contains many crowns, of which, on every voyage, he receives a share for his allowance. Decidedly we give the palm to the Conductor.

For the Conductor, emblematic language is not yet obsolete; he is a modern knight-errant, and his lady is the company whom he serves; you may recognize her by the colours she permits him to wear.

Here are the Conductors of three principal establishments. Look at the first: the golden horn of Orlando is hung round his neck; his lady is *La Royale*, and this talisman, the source of so many wonders, accounts for the prodigious riches which she boasts of.

The next has for his insignia a silver wand: *La Générale* is his mistress; in placing herself under Mercury's wing, she invokes the god of messengers and commerce*

The third is the devoted slave of *La Française*; he is newly entered in the lists, and displays with pride the gold and silver of his double branch of oak. May it prove to him a fruitful bough! "Union is strength," is his motto. May God and his lady protect him!

Hide your diminished heads, all you who usurp the name, conductors of *coucous*, train waggons, omnibusses, &c. To journey over a smooth road for a few hours, to watch without fatigue the steam curling into its thousand eddies, to survey, during the day, the muddy pavements of Paris, are these the functions of the real Conductor? Once mounted to your seats, have you your passengers to keep in order, the ostlers to threaten, the postilions to punish? Can he whom you parody, take his rest at night in a comfortable bed? Does he always find, at a fixed hour, his meals ready for him? Have you, like him, to be exposed to the summer's scorching sun in the *landes*, or to the stormy winter's cold in the *Jura*? And this is not all; privations and dangers of all kinds, accidents of all natures are his daily lot, his hourly existence.

Make way, make way for the real Conductor!

There are many decided varieties in this numerous family; all equally easy to distinguish. We intend to sketch some of the principal. They are:—1, The Worsted Leg; 2, The Dandy; 3, The Jolly Fellow; 4, The Grumbler; 5, The Braggart; and 6,—last though not least,—The Thorough-bred.

The Worsted Leg† may be known by his awkward manners, his heavy gait, his slovenly dress, by his shirt collar going over his ears, in spite of the uniform. His accent is Auvergnat or Flemish; in his ears are agreeably dangling large gold rings; unfitted, morally and physically, for the discharge of the different duties of his situation, at each journey he is sure to experience some new loss. On the road, the slightest accident occasions him considerable delay; he has no authority over the postilions who laugh at his awkwardness in clambering on the roof. Every innkeeper, when it his day to stop there, takes advantage of his dulness, and without fear of being reported, deliberately warms up, for the comfort of the travellers, the dinner of the day before. Horses, repasts, nothing is ready. Nobody obeys his voice.

* There are in France three Joint Stock Companies, proprietors of stage coaches, running on the principal road—La Compagnie Royale, La Compagnie Générale, La Compagnie Française. The last has however disappeared since the original paper was written.—*Ed.*

† La Jambe de Laine.

One Worsted Leg on the road is enough to disturb the best arrangements. And yet he is an honest man, mild tempered, economical, and incapable of appropriating a centime not strictly his own. He never complains except when at last, in his own interest, he is requested to retire, and often will try to go on till the last shilling of the two hundred pounds he is obliged to leave with the company, as security, is absorbed in fines, or in making good the loss of property committed to his charge.

The Dandy is a young man well educated; he has been a lawyer's clerk, or a linendraper's assistant. Some frolics, or a wish to see the country, induced him to change his profession; but he cannot entirely divest himself of his former habits. His linen is always white, his uniform of the finest cloth, and his nails most carefully attended to; he has the strongest aversion to the black and oily grease used for the wheels of his diligence. There is a slight affectation in his manner of speaking; he is fond of displaying his knowledge to his passengers; his familiarity is annoying to them, and to his self-importance he is indebted for the hatred of all office-keepers on the road, and for many fines.

"He plays the gentleman," is the common remark of his comrades; and this fatal phrase flies along the line of road traversed by the dandy. It precedes him at the relays, the inns, at the coach-offices; and whether it be envy, or a spirit of vengeance on the part of the subordinates, or a want of personal exertions on his part, his coach is always behind time.

It is remarked that no Dandy has grown old in the uniform of a Conductor; six months, or a year at most, suffice to cure him of his roving propensities.

The Worsted Leg and the Dandy are the two plagues of all Diligence proprietors.

With as many faults as good qualities, the Jolly Fellow* and the Grumbler† form two varieties of distinctly opposite natures.

One is liveliness personified; the other morose beyond all expression. Could Democritus and Heraclitus make their reappearance in this world attired in a Conductor's uniform, one would be the Jolly Fellow, and the other the Grumbler.

The Jolly Fellow laughs at everything, and is a never ending joker. Active and intelligent, he obtains by his fun what the Grumbler owes to his peevish tones and cross looks; the idol of the postilions, who call him the "Good Fellow," he is ever ready to give them money for drink. More than once his coach has been nearly overturned while he was playing tricks with them.

His opposite never jokes, and only escapes by a miracle from a like accident; for the postilion, at the risk of breaking his own neck, turns too short round the corners out of revenge for the Grumbler's stinginess.

They are both proficients in driving, and thoroughly acquainted with the duties of their situation. They would be irreproachable, if it were not that the Grumbler

* La Bamboche. † Le Potin.

being always disposed to make complaints of everything and everybody, excites disputes; and that the Jolly Fellow aids and abets the quarrels for the sake of the amusement to be derived from them. Besides, one is sulky with his passengers, the other too jovial. The Grumbler, not to encumber the place he has reserved for himself on the roof, that he may sleep more at his ease, refuses, in spite of the most urgent entreaties, to make room for the box containing the best bonnet of a fair passenger. The Jolly Fellow, braving the rules, boldly takes his seat in the coupé, and freely enters into conversation with the pretty lady sitting there alone.

They are both on excellent terms with the excise and police officers: the Jolly fellow amuses them, and everybody knows that when a gendarme laughs, he is disarmed; the Grumbler, thanks to his rough appearance and manners, is not even suspected. So that for them nothing is more rare than condemnations and fines. The excise officers'* business would be considerably lightened, if the Jolly Fellow and the Grumbler were the only Diligence Conductors.

But happily for them, the Braggart† exists. This variety, always at war with the excise, whose agents he is sometimes successful in deceiving, is the object of particular watchfulness on their part. Similar to the hawk that pounces upon the small bird by hovering over it, they dog his footsteps, observe his movements, and when they sieze him, bind him fast and make him pay dearly enough for his delinquencies.

The Braggart may be recognised by many different signs. His clothes of rich material and carefully arranged, are sure to be decorated with some ornament not mentioned in the prescribed uniform. However severely he may be punished for it, he could sooner be rendered dumb, than prevented from wearing his gold or silver lacing wider than the regular width. Sometimes he adorns his cap with a cockade; at others, he ties round his waist a large red scarf. A hair chain, a gold watch, and frills to his shirt, complete his fanciful toilette. His whole bearing is bold, and we may add, often imprudent; a large tuft covers his chin; with his hands in his pockets, and standing on his legs, he loves to attitudinize; his walk, although disparaged by an oscillatory movement, is yet easy, and even graceful, and he is irresistable to the Charlottes and Pamelas of the hotels and taverns. He could more easily enumerate the innumerable small glasses of *liqueur* he swallows during the day, than the conquests he makes on his road.

The Braggart thinks himself the equal of any, and very superior to the mere clerks, to whom he only consents by dint of fines, to carry the tips of his fingers to the extreme edge of his cap, by way of salutation. He is, however, generous; his purse is open at the first thought of a charitable action; his comrades always find him ready in case of need; nevertheless, he is not a favourite; jealous of his

* They are have the superintendence of the regulations concerning the stage coaches, &c.

† *Le Flambant.*

activity, of his temerity, of his skill in blowing the horn, or what not, they give him behind his back the names of "swallow-all," "spoil-trade," &c.; and yet they endeavour as much as possible to imitate him, and succeed wonderfully—as to his faults.

Unfortunate would it be for any one to speak ill before him of the company which he represents. Rivalry is his dream, his happiness, his god. A rough tilter, he soon disables all champions and their steeds, who enter the lists to give him battle. To pass a rival, he fears not to descend a steep hill at full gallop: an imprudence that is most often crowned, we must say, with extreme good luck.

He appears to have a decided objection to marriage; yet lovers of scandal affirm that he does not fear bigamy. Be this as it may, he is very particular about decorum; and his wives, fortunately separated by great distances, are never known to one another.

His favourite game is billiards, in which he excels. He occasionally also condescends to play picquet and dominos.

We should, perhaps, be partial to the Braggart, if it were not that some evidences of fraud and smuggling have tarnished his reputation. His imagination cannot remain inactive; he has always some new and ingenious contrivances, and in carrying them into effect he does not submit to be bound by the common rules applicable to traffic; he knows no law, he acknowledges no frontiers, he is most averse to pay any duty. Strange inconsistency of the human heart! this same man who would blush to commit a petty theft, robs without shame the public revenue, and never scruples in the least to cheat his employers out of the carriage of the goods he transports on his own account. He seems, on the contrary, to pride himself upon these exploits, and looks with contempt upon those in the fraternity who do not understand their business.

Although preferable to the other varieties, the Braggart cannot, in his turn, stand a comparison with the Thorough-bred Conductor. This is truly the pattern conductor. It is sad that the variety should be so rare!

The Thorough-bred Conductor is no longer youthful, but he is still hale and hearty, and his scanty grey locks testify long and honourable services. His embonpoint, far from being against him, gives to his appearance a certain consequence which accords remarkably well with his character. Add to this a German accent, a pipe, the indispensable appendage to his equipment, always strictly conformable to rules, and you would be able to recognize, from this description, the pattern of the profession.

Three objects share almost equally in the affections of the true Conductor, namely, his coach, his wife, and his dog. We regret that it is not consistent with truth to place the wife first; but as faithful historians, we are reluctantly obliged to admit that, to the best of our belief, she occupies the position we have assigned her.

His dog is his inseparable companion; he cheers him on the road, keeps guard over the coach when his master leaves it, sits by him awake while he sleeps, and caresses him when he wakens.

His wife is generally a good manager of the old school; during her husband's absence, she turns to profitable account the various articles he brings home every week. Apart from the vortex of luxury which in these days carries away all classes of society, the Conductor's wife has still preserved her simplicity, and seeks to raise herself only in her children, by giving them a better education than that of their father.

The boys, however, when arrived at a suitable age, for the most part mount the coach-box; they have been accustomed from their childhood to regard it as their patrimony, and worthily continue the career open to them. It is thus, in our days, that the Thorough-bred race is perpetuated. May the blood lose nothing of its vigour by running in younger veins, or of its brightness by the more careful nurture of its young shoots!

Nothing can exceed the Thorough-bred Conductor's love for his coach; it may be likened to a mother's tenderness for her new-born infant, or the first passion of a youthful heart; he contemplates it with delight and pride, and on the journey, should any accident occur to it, he is sure to have about him the means to set it to rights.

A favourite with many a traveller, there are always some awaiting his turn to start. On the important day, he superintends the packing of his coach, assorts the luggage for the roof, the boot, &c.; and his inspection over, the horses neighing impatient to be gone, while the hour for starting is still striking, look at him giving the signal; with his way-bills between his teeth, he springs with one bound to his seat, and blows his horn for adieu.

The coach starts; from that moment he is no longer a simple mortal, but a demigod on his triumphal car. The country through which he passes is bright and beautiful, the hills look golden, the vallies smiling and gay. For him are the best postilions, the freshest horses, the most delicious repasts!

The poor villager whom he has spared a long and weary walk by giving him a lift, gratis, bows low on his approach; the young girl smiles at him, for it was with him that her sweetheart started last year for the great town, and it is he who will soon (at least, she hopes so,) restore him to her faithful and affectionate as before. Even the little children hail his appearance with joyous shouts, and they are sure to receive some sweetmeats as a reward for their innocent flattery.

Such is Father François; the following anecdote, for the truth of which we vouch, will complete his portrait.

It was a summer's evening, the last rays of the sun had faded from the horizon, and the cloudless sky seemed to announce one of those fine nights so desirable at this season of the year for the enjoyment of the traveller.

All at once the air freshened; a black speck appeared in the sky, which gra-

dually increased in size, and approached nearer and nearer. To a few large drops succeeded torrents of rain, which inundated the road, ploughing it up on all sides. The feeble light of the coach lamp had been extinguished at the first breath of the storm; and the darkness would have been impenetrable if the frequent flashes of lightning had not illumined the road they were journeying.

Father François calmed the terror of his passengers, kept up the postilion's courage, whose every movement he was carefully watching, and seemed to struggle single-handed against the united elements.

But soon the storm raged with redoubled fury. Frightened at the continual claps of thunder, excited by the screams which are heard from the inside of the coach, the horses no longer obey the unsteady hand that guides them; they start to the edge of the road—another moment, and the diligence will be dragged down the precipice—already it balances on the brink of the abyss—every passenger is terrified into a dead silence, that is broken only by the sound of a heavy fall, which the mountain echo prolongs.

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The passengers were saved—thanks to the admirable presence of mind and intrepidity of Father François, who with his experienced eye had calculated beforehand the danger. To jump to the ground at the most critical moment, to cut the traces with a firm and skilful hand, had been for him the affair of an instant, and the poor horses alone rolled down the precipice. . . .

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The violence of the storm having abated, the passengers reached the neighbouring village on foot, and there receeivd the necessary assistance.

As to Father François, one thought only seemed to pre-occupy him; he was anxiously examining every part of his cherished coach, and after ascertaining that it had not suffered in the least, and that a fresh relay of horses could be procured to continue the journey, he joined the rest of the party.

They press round him to thank and compliment him; then for the first time do they perceive a handkerchief saturated with blood bound round his arm. He has hurt himself severely. The praises are redoubled; every assistance is offered him for the present, and money for the future.

Insensible to everything but the attraction of a glass of brandy, "It's my duty," said he, "this is nothing. *Coach* is waiting, ladies and gentlemen."

Then addressing the postilion, and rising his elbow on a level with his chin, so as to make him understand the reward that awaited him, he said, "You are good for nothing; make up for lost time. Start!"

Father François is not the only Conductor who would have acted thus.

Similar accidents occur only too often in the adventurous life of a Conductor, and his courage and devotedness are the more praiseworthy that he expects to reap from them neither recompence nor glory.

Hurrah, then, and three cheers for the REAL CONDUCTOR.





THE NOTARY.

BY H. DE BALZAC.



ERGING towards forty, plump, short, hale, and dressed in black, the personage we are here introducing is apparently full of confidence in himself, rather stiff, and decidedly pedantic and affected. Upon his features you observe a mask of bland silliness, which, feigned at first, has become by practice, the confirmed expression of his countenance—showing the passive calmness of the diplomatist, without his acuteness. The yellowish tint of his bald forehead, is indicative of long toil, internal struggles, many cares, and a stormy youth, but bears no trace of actual passion:—"This man must be a Notary," you at once exclaim.

The tall, thin Notary is an exception. Physiologically speaking, notarial avocations are incompatible with some constitutions. An irritible and nervous disposition, which may occasionally be observed in attorneys, would be fatal to the Notary. His profession requires extreme patience; he must obtain such control over himself as to be able to listen with apparently unaffected resignation to the interminable communications of his clients, each of whom thinks that his business is the only one in the world worthy of attention.

The attorney's client is passionate; he wants to carry on the war, to prepare

the attack, to make good his defence. Peace alone is the Notary's province, though he is the victim of a thousand conflicting personal interests, assuming all possible shapes. What he is doomed to undergo may only be compared to the sufferings of blank paper and—women, two things apparently so tractable. Sometimes the Notary resists, but the angles of his features disappear in the struggle. His flattened face presents ideas the most commonplace, and his discourse is made up of aphorisms totally innocent of meaning. No artist can endure to look him in the face. "There is a Notary," says every one who sees him; and the expressive phrase, "*Notarial look*," has become proverbial.

Yet the Notary is a victim. Dull and heavy as he now appears, he was once blithe and merry; he may have been witty, and was perhaps once in love. Mysterious being! deserving of pity, as much when you are fond of your profession, as when you hold it in abhorrence, it is our intention, as it is our duty, to make you better known. Simple-minded, yet cunning, you are at once an Œdipus and a Sphinx; you resemble the one in your obscure phraseology, while you possess also the shrewdness of the other. To many you are certainly incomprehensible, though we think you are not indefinable; nor are we deterred from trying to portray your character by the conviction that we must necessarily reveal many of your secrets.

The Notary presents the curious phenomenon of the caterpillar tribe, but with him their order is inverted. His first stage is that of the butterfly; and, unfortunately, the remembrance of his wings and gaudy colours haunts him when a chrysalis, and even when he has degenerated into a grub. This cruel metamorphosis of the light-hearted and happy clerk into—the Notary, is of gradual, but certain, accomplishment. The Notary is the offspring of society. His features, from which all expression has progressively disappeared, may be taken as a specimen of those of the middle classes.

What their profession dooms them to see, hear, and reflect upon every day; the dramas acted by clients for them alone in their own offices, afford Notaries ample scope for the exercise of wit and satire, yet cannot but give them a bad opinion of human nature; neither may they laugh and indulge in raillery. Clients would be afraid of a witty Notary; he must neither say too much when he speaks, nor alarm by his silence; his thoughts and opinions he must lock up in his breast. Should he presume to be openly quick-sighted and penetrating, he would soon find himself without a client. His clients rule his existence, and condemn him to the perpetual use of his notarial mask, which he hardly dares throw aside even amid his family enjoyments. He always has a part to play; he must be grave with his clients and his clerks. Professionally, he is obliged to guess what could not be explained to him without many blushes, and to seem unconscious of what he understands too well. He is always searching into the innermost recesses of his clients' hearts, and not unfrequently he makes fearful discoveries. To hear him trying mildly to discountenance some ungenerous or

dishonest plan! "Sir," he will say to one, "you really cannot do this; it it is not in keeping with your character; excuse my telling you that you quite mistake the meaning of the law, which may happen to the best-intentioned man in the world, &c." Or, "Madam, I cannot but approve your feelings—they are natural, and so far honourable; but I cannot advise you to carry out your intentions. Your high sense of what is truly honest, must remain unquestionable, even after your death."

After such a preamble, while the client is still hesitating, the Notary continues, "You will certainly not act in this manner; and if you do not take my advice, I cannot lend you my assistance for such a proceeding." His professional eloquence can no farther go than this last word of a *Ministerial Officer*, as Notaries are called by the French law.

Obliged to appear sad in the presence of heirs who would shout with joy if they were alone; to condole with widows who feel in their hearts the happiest women in the world; to talk of death and children, of wills and marriage settlements to young and thoughtless girls; to throw away the same words and the same reasoning upon persons of every age and condition; to see everything without appearing to look, and to look without appearing to see; to go into feigned passions; to laugh without cause; to argue in earnest upon the most trivial circumstances; to preach morals exactly as a cook dresses dishes;—Notaries grow stupid as artillerymen grow deaf.

Clever men do not constitute the majority in this world: dulness prevails, and the Notary must bend his mind to the level of his clients. He cannot resist the power of habit, and his intellect is soon narrowed by his profession: nor is this all. He is so tormented by his clients that he becomes himself an insufferable bore in society; there he carries the same hackneyed arguments that he gravely delivers in his office. Mixed up with so many conflicting interests, he is interested in nothing. The ingratitude with which he is repaid for every service he renders, makes him callous to all human suffering. Yet is the Notary not without a certain greatness; in spite of all the perversity of this world, amidst the intricate contention of private interests incessantly at war in his presence, and often through his agency—his character remains unsullied, and he preserves his honesty. Lakes of asphaltum, in which so many private fortunes will be swallowed up, lie open before him, but he does not throw in his line. He draws the deeds of partnership of all joint-stock companies, but nothing farther; he remains as much a stranger to the consequences as the net-maker to the birds ensnared. This state of things is the final result of divers transformations wrought since he entered the profession. Nature who takes so long to form a perfect shell, is certainly surpassed by civilisation in the creation of the social crustacea, called a Notary.

Sometimes the Notary begins as an errand boy, as a lad ambitious of dying a general, would enlist for a soldier. He goes through all the stages of the pro-

fession. A young man who has spent five or six years in one or more offices, cannot be expected to retain much of his simplicity: he has seen the underwork of many fortunes; witnessed the selfish quarrels of heirs and legatees, in the presence of corpses still warm; he has often observed human avarice arrested only in its schemes by the penal enactments of the law, Of the corruption incessantly finding its way into the Notary's office, many clients are the active agents. The daughter loudly complains of her father; parents expose the perversity of their children. All the bad feelings seeking assistance for the execution of vindictive plans or deeds of a discreditable nature, resort to the Notary's office.

Nothing can be more painful than the task too often necessary of taking an inventory of the goods, chattels, and papers of the dead; and this duty comes within the exclusive province of the notary.

A mother dies, surrounded by her weeping family, who are overwhelmed with unfeigned marks of love and respect. Her eyes are scarcely closed before the Notary is summoned; and assisted by a clerk, he forthwith commences his investigation. Private papers are found bearing evidence of criminal conduct, and are instantly destroyed; and when, a few days after, the Notary has to listen to pompous encomia on the character of the deceased lady, he does not disturb the happy illusions of the family; he and his clerk preserve a generous silence; but indescribable smiles may be seen on their lips, and they exchange significant looks as they leave the house. They know that the great diplomatist whom they have just left, the statesman who can blind the eyes of all Europe, has been deceived like a child by his own wife.

Again the Notary and his clerk proceed to the house of a professed philanthrophist deceased, the funeral panegyric of whose rare virtues has just been pronounced in the presence of numerous mourning friends. Our men of the law naturally expect to find treatises on great social questions, benevolent plans industriously devised for the universal benefit of mankind. Alas! the venerable magistrate was a debauchee, and the clerk discovers a library of infamous books, which he carries triumphantly to the office: for it is a rule of long standing that all immoral books are to be omitted in the inventory, and become in consequence the perquisite of the Notary's clerks. Papers being divided into several files, each designated by a letter, the irreligious and indecent prints are collected under the letter G, and this letter belongs to the clerks. "Have you brought *the letter G?*" is the general cry in the office when a clerk returns from taking an inventory. The contents of letter G. are regularly divided; and of the witty comments and pointed remarks which ensue between the young men, in the absence of their principal, the less said the better.

All this takes place in the presence of a boy ten or twelve years old, generally clever and intelligent, we mean the junior, generally called "the little clerk," the anointed emperor of the gamins of Paris. The youngster is ashamed to ap-

pear less knowing than his fellow clerks, and accordingly outvies them all in ribaldry ignorant, however, of the meaning of half he utters. The standard of his depravity may easily be appreciated. There is a public office at the courts of justice in Paris, where the signatures of Notaries have to be certified; it is crowded every morning with junior clerks, sportive as gold fish, and mischievous as monkeys, who so pester the crabbed old clerk in attendance, that he scarcely considers himself safe behind his iron railings. A policeman or two are required to keep this small fry in order, and it is said that an application had been made to the Prefect of Police; but he, doubtless, dreads a contamination of his agents by this swarm of disorderly imps, whose language would make a convict's hair stand on end, and at whose actions Lucifer would shudder. They know everything, say everything, and laugh at everything. They have originated a sort of telegraph amongst themselves, by means of which all notarial news is simultaneously circulated through every office in Paris. Does a Notary quarrel with his wife, or does a misfortune happen in his family; every particular spreads like wildfire, and within twenty-four hours is known in every attorney's and notary's office in Paris, by means of the errand clerks.

The three junior clerks in a Notary's office, who generally intend to follow the profession, have little to distinguish them from other young men beginning the world.

The third clerk is twenty years of age; he prepares drafts of deeds of conveyance, and reports on wills, part of his time being devoted to the study of the law; it is also his business to pay to the proper office the sums (usually large) due for stamps and duty, to obtain the signatures of clients to deeds of importance, and see them properly executed. These duties teach him that discretion and probity are indispensible qualifications for a Notary, that caution is one of his professional instincts. Authors, artists, and men of science often preserve all their life the frank and open-hearted candour of a school-boy. The Notary's clerk, at twenty, has more reserve: not to be discreet, and withal scrupulously honest, would be for a third clerk to renounce his profession. Very few clerks indeed require twice warning upon the subject, in fact they would be discharged on the second breach of confidence, as utterly unworthy of trust.

The second clerk's responsibility is even more serious. He is the cashier of the office. The sealing, engrossing, execution, and registration of deeds are in his province. The third clerk is more grave than his juniors, the second hardly enjoys a joke; he may occasionally indulge in a more or less sarcastic sally in his admonitions to his juniors, bnt he already feels by anticipation on his shoulders the official silk collar, the badge of the Notary. Certainly there are some few clerks, under five-and-twenty, who have not yet renounced all the gaieties of youth, who dance at the *Chaumière*, and from time to time, take a short trip into the country, near Paris. But once twenty-five, every second clerk, despairing of ever being able to pay the enormous price of a practice in Paris, has se-

rious thoughts of settling in the country, and looks about him for an office in some little country town, where he may preside without control.

The plodders among Parisian Notaries' clerks have instituted a kind of club, called among themselves *Conférence*. The members meet by appointment usually on Sunday mornings, to debate and consider the nicer points of jurisprudence; the "conference" generally ending in a breakfast provided by fines and penalties for non-attendance, which constitute the funds of the club. There is at these meetings, a great deal of speaking, the result of which is to confirm every embryo lawyer in his own opinion; resembling, in so far, the two chambers, though without ever coming to a division.

Most Notaries' clerks come of industrious families, and their schooling is generally summed up in the words "Go, and make your fortune;" hence, hard work at their office from morning till night does not disagree with them. Of love, they know very little; if ever a pretty face disturbs their studies for a few hours, the fancy only inspires an attempt or two at a female portrait sketched with pen and ink on the back of a draft paper. They are ignorant of the meaning of the word gallantry; and generally affect a peculiar expression of countenance, blending the plain straightforwardness of the tradesman, with the rough bluntness of the soldier. There is something evidently exaggerated, and *put on*, about their brusque and unpolished manners; probably proceeding from the desire of increasing their importance, or from their wish to appear of more difficult access to their friends or future clients.

But whatever the shade of their character, or the tone of their manners, they become in due time head clerks, when they may be considered half Notaries. The head clerk's grand object is to make it understood that his employer, without his assistance, would commit innumerable blunders. Indeed, he not unfrequently tyrannises over his principal, often entering his private office to submit remarks or suggestions, and returning discontented. The Notary exclusively trusts him with many important deeds; and though there are some transactions which the principal must conduct in person, the head clerk invariably enjoys his unlimited confidence.

The head clerk is presently absorbed by the idea of purchasing a practice for himself; and now he contrives to gain introductions into families that include portioned but unmarried daughters; he becomes remarkably economical, and assumes the exterior of a steady, settled man of the world. Some aspirants to Notarial dignity affect elegant manners, take to the use of spectacles as conferring gravity and importance, and assiduously visit all rich families where they can get introduced. This is a specimen of their polite language when they address the mistress of the house, showing at the same time that they are acquainted with every member of the family: "I was glad to hear from the brother of your son-in-law, that your daughter is quite recovered from her long illness."

The head-clerk is as well aware of the marriage connexions to be formed

within his circle of visits, as a French minister is acquainted with the alliances of princely German houses: it is for one, as for the other, a matter of business. He professes to be a conservative in politics, and scrupulously regulates his conduct by the highest standard of moral principles. He never plays high in society, but frequently joins his colleagues in private meetings, which often terminate in a supper far superior to the celebrated revelries of dandies.

During the last twelve years, several head clerks, perhaps thirty or forty in a hundred, impatient of making a rapid fortune, have abandoned the profession, turned directors of insurance or other joint stock companies, and given themselves up to speculation. These renegades do not require particular notice here. With a few such exceptions, however, all head clerks become in due time Notaries; nor is there in any condition of life, neither in the church, the army, nor at court, nor even on the stage, such a revolution as the change perceptible in the head clerk after being sworn in a Notary. His countenance at once loses every remaining spark of expression, a more certain sign of his new dignity than even his official silk collar. His manners to the clerks—yesterday his intimate acquaintance—undergo an instantaneous change; from familiar and frank he becomes cold and distant. He retains nothing of his former self. The phenomenon of his third and final transformation is accomplished: he is a Notary.

Formerly great intimacy subsisted between the Parisian Notaries; it is even said that, in the time of the Empire, they used to console themselves for their reserve in public by getting up private convivial parties of the most festive nature. But of late years, Notaries have been less friendly with each other.

Previous to 1814, they seldom remained less than thirty years in the profession; now they generally retire at the end of ten years practice. Impatient to make a rapid fortune, and to enjoy it as men of leisure, they have lost much of their pristine character: no longer confidential magistrates appointed by families to watch over and guard their interests, they have almost turned speculators.

Two ways are open to the Notary: he may either wait for clients and business at his office, or go abroad to seek them. The married Notary who retains a certain respect for the tenets of the old school, is always to be found at his office; there he will, with the utmost patience and attention, listen to a client's circumlocutory statement, and endeavour to enlighten him to his own interest; but he finds his business rather on the decline. His bows to his clients are discriminately regulated according to their rank and station, and the nature of their business. Before the nobleman, he bows to the ground; rich clients he greets with a very respectful and cordial nod, confining himself to returning the bow of those who are in difficulties; while he shows his poor client to the door without answering his good morning.

The little Notary who may so frequently be seen in a cabriolet in business hours, is not yet married. He is still thin, goes a great deal into society, and at all balls

and parties seeks to distinguish himself by his elegant manners. His office is situated in a fashionable street, and he treats all his clients with equal courtesy: he would bow to the column of the Place Vendôme if he could turn the acquaintanceship to any account. His obsequiousness may be laughed at, but what does he care? His business is prosperous, and to keep it flourishing is his object.

The Notary might hope to find in conjugal affection some consolation for the cares and anxieties of business; but to him the marriage yoke is heavier than to any other man. As a king marries for the sake of his subjects, so the Notary marries on account of his profession, and not for himself. The father who marries his daughter to a Notary does not think of the man, but of his practice.

An heiress in worsted stockings, a girl whose large marriage portion was earned behind the counter, and even a lady, if perchance he happen to meet with one, are all the same to him. If there is anything stranger in society than a set of Notaries, it is a set of Notaresses. Notaresses are extremely severe to each other, are afraid of being two at the same party, and shun all approach to acquaintanceship. However obscure their origin, they all are anxious to become great ladies, and maintain a rather expensive establishment: some keep a carriage and frequent the Opera Comique. When they chance to pay a visit to the Italian Opera, they create such a sensation that the fashionable ladies among the audience enquire of one another who that person can be. They are remarkable neither for the refinement of their minds nor the depth and delicacy of their feelings. They know they were married only for their money; and their husbands' occupations leaving them abundant leisure, they take tolerable care of themselves, and attend most particulary to their personal comfort. Paris, however, is rich in wonders; and it is not impossible when you meet with a fascinating woman, or a true Parisian lady, that your Beatrice be a Notary's wife.

In almost all Notaries' establishments there is now no communication between the office and the private apartments; and Notaries' wives love to boast that they do not know their husbands' clerks, either by name or by sight. Some years ago, Notary, wife, clerks, and children, used patriarchally to dine at the same table; but the revolutionary reforms introduced into modern society have swept away that good old custom. At the present day, the head clerk only has a room in the Notary's house; but he is not generally admitted to his principal's table, which arrangement is perhaps more convenient to all parties.

If, perchance, the Notary have not the flat, expressionless countenance we have described; if he be not endowed with the undoubted mediocrity which in his client's eyes constitutes the best security; if he be not wholly destitute of fancy, imagination and taste for the fine arts,—then is he a lost man. Sooner or later he goes off his rail, becomes a bankrupt, and absconds to Brussels, the America of ruined French Notaries and stockbrokers; carrying off his clients' money and the regret of his few friends, and leaving his wife free in Paris.





THE THEATRICAL AGENT.

BY CHARLES FRIÈS.



OMEDIANS TO BE HAD HERE, WHOLESALE AND RETAIL: ALSO SCENERY, MUSIC, DRESSES, DECORATIONS, AND ALL OTHER PROPERTIES, AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE PRICE. COUNTRY AND FOREIGN ORDERS EXECUTED.

Such is the notice that the Theatrical Agent, following the example of grocers, hosiers, &c., would post over his door, printed in bold type, if now-a-days things were called by their right names. But this not being the case, there is no such announcement of the Theatrical Agent's profession: nay, a stranger, on being introduced to his presence, finds him giving himself the lofty airs of a government officer, comfortably reclining in his easy chair from ten in the morning till four in the afternoon, precisely.

It is not more than forty years since the first Theatrical Agency Office was opened in Paris, for the purpose of negotiating engagements between managers and the numerous class of actors. It was originated by a poor devil of a country actor, who, going to Paris in search of an engagement, and having his services refused at every theatre, from the Theatre Français, downwards, found himself

in the unpleasant situation of a man without sixpence in his pocket, or an hour's credit. To run to the next bridge and throw himself into the Seine seemed the only resource left him; yet did he find a less desperate means of extricating himself from his critical position. The idea occurred to him, that by establishing himself as a medium of communication between managers and actors, he could materially assist the latter in procuring engagements, and even support himself by the business. "There are" soliloquised our famishing Roscius, "register offices for cooks, housemaids, clerks, and coachmen, but where can the manager in want of actors apply? This is a blank I will undertake to fill up. I will take in my province, managers, tragedians, comedians, singers, &c. Under my especial care will be placed all who, to amuse the public, laugh, weep, declaim, mimic, smile, sigh, and gesticulate; and as it is but fair that I should be remunerated for my pains, every actor who, through my agency, concludes an engagement, shall pay me a commission, say of two-and-a-half per cent. on his salary. Actors in general not being rich, I shall not object, whenever it may be necessary, to wait for my commission till the first payment of their salary takes place. Yes, ladies and gentlemen of the sandal and buskin, for two and a half per cent. commission, I will undertake to procure engagements for ye all!"

The first step was to take an office and enter into correspondence with actors and managers, as THEATRICAL AGENT, though all who have recourse to his agency have long since dubbed him "human flesh dealer." Such was the success of the first tradesman in the line that, after a few years, he realised an income of £700, on which he modestly retired. There are at the present day, in Paris, eight Theatrical Agents. The one who is most in vogue, who is also the special correspondent of the St. Petersburgh managements, recently received from the Emperor Nicholas a flattering autograph letter, together with a gold snuff-box, ornamented with diamonds, in token of his imperial admiration of the graceful pirouettes of Mdlle. Taglioni.

The Agent does little business with the Paris theatres, and the reason of this is obvious. The directors seldom engage actors whose reputation is not in some way established. Occasionally, however, he obtains a *début* for some actor of provincial celebrity. When any actor or actress is allowed leave of absence, the Agent undertakes also to treat in his or her name with the country managers, who wish to secure them. If Paris theatres are not supplied by him, the rest of France, Belgium, Prussia, Germany, England, Russia, and even Turkey and the United States are inundated by his exportations. There is not, on the surface of the globe, a city, a borough, or a village, no matter in what latitude, so long as it can boast of a theatre, that is not perfectly well known to him.

How would a Philanthropist shudder with indignation, should a letter from a manager to one of these flesh merchants ever fall into his hands. For these men, an actor is nothing but merchandize, a bale of goods which they select and send off by coach or ship, exactly in the same manner as the slave trade is con-

ducted in the colonies. We should not wonder if some day their scrutiny were carried so far as to look into the *postulants'* mouths, to count, or ascertain, the teeth they have left, and the amount of their salary would be reduced in proportion to the deficiency. For the gratification of our readers who may be curious to know the style of a manager's communication, here is a specimen :—

" Dear Sir,

" Neither of the three ' lovers' successively received will suit us. The first has bandy legs; the second is too stout; and the third's nose is ridiculously flat. People here prefer legs straight, noses idem, and reasonable dimensions. Keep these requisites in view, and endeavour to send us something better. The deuce take it ! we pay the price; we ought to be better served."

A well-stocked wardrobe is a necessary complement, an essential condition of success, for all provincial actors. It is particularly on the stage that a prepossessing appearance is most welcome, and many actors owe all the applause they obtain to their dress !

The Agent need never fear to be short of *goods*. Actors come to him without his being obliged to seek them. At the news of a vacancy, they crowd in dozens to his office, and when he has made his selection, his only trouble is to dismiss those that he cannot or will not engage. For he has his *protégés*, his favourite customers, whom he naturally tries to push before others. However, he makes few enemies, thanks to the wonderful address with which he gilds the pill for the discontented. He says to one,—" I did not send you there, because it is sure to be a failure : the audience is so bad that all the actors who go are hissed ;" and to another,—" This would not suit you at all ; I have something better in view for you." Thus, by a little well-timed flattery, he manages to please everybody. If the Agent has any relative in the profession, he becomes, through his (the Agent's) influence, a regular plague for the theatres. Tolerable or bad, he must be engaged. Is he hissed in comedy, he reappears in tragedy. Should he fail in the first parts, he quickly studies the second. It is all the same to him ; till at last the public, tired of hissing him, let him quietly earn his sixty or eighty pounds a-year without further opposition.

We have already mentioned that the Agent never experiences a dearth of comedians. When he receives an order, he has only to obtain the signature of the object of his choice to the written agreement, and to despatch him and his wardrobe by the first conveyance. The arrival is acknowledged, as would be the receipt of a bale of cotton or a cask of sugar ; and—the transaction is at an end. The Actor's success or failure is not in the Agent's province.

His best customers, we do not mean those who reflect the most credit on his taste and judgment, but those who are the most profitable, are the *failures*. Too bad to be endured anywhere, their occupation consists in going from one

place to another, to play once, and then to leave, on the payment of a month's salary, the usual indemnity in such cases. These *sticks* being constantly in want of fresh engagements, are obliged to have recourse to his assistance, and he turns their dulness to the best advantage.

However, a time arrives when there must be an end to the many unsuccessful trials of such an actor. There remains at last not a single theatre but where he has been hissed, groaned at, hooted. After changing his name a hundred times, he is sure to be recognized in whatever disguise he may assume. Then, he is completely "blown upon," and, after innumerable failures in every department, not being able to *fail* any more, he is obliged to renounce his country expeditions, and thinks himself fortunate in obtaining, in some minor theatre, a situation as prompter or chorus-singer. Sometimes he unites with a certain number of strolling actors, of equal talent with himself, and gives a few representations in the suburbs of Paris. He might be seen also carrying into an architect's or artist's studio, such letters as the following:—

"Gentlemen,

"As a dramatic artist just arrived from the country, and being at present without any engagement, I take the liberty of soliciting your attention for one half-hour, while I recite my parts of Orosmane, Tancrède, Buridan, Oreste, Néron, or any other character you may select.

"Feeling pretty certain that my talent will please, I flatter myself that you will kindly, with the permission of your estimable professors, comply with my request.

"I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.,

"————————,

"From the Imperial Theatre of St. Petersburgh, of the Conservatoire in 18.., and Pupil of the late Mr. Talma."

This man often ends his career by throwing himself from the tower of Notre Dame, or from the column of the Place Vendôme. This is the last and most complete of his falls.

The Agent is not unfrequently assailed by very troublesome visitors. For instance, there is one who has just introduced himself. He is a tall young man, rather good-looking, and his dress is not wanting in a certain elegance, although his linen is not particularly white.

"Have I the honour of addressing Mr. ———, the Theatrical Agent?"

"Yes, Sir. In what way can I serve you?"

"Sir, I am a singer, and wish to procure an engagement."

"Very well. Where have you been engaged lately?"

"Oh! I have never been on the stage yet. But, having a very good tenor

voice"—Here the young man places his hat upon a chair, and begins to sing, in Stentorian tones, "*Oh Mathilde*"

"I beg your pardon. I do not doubt the beauty of your voice; but, to play the tenors, you must have some practical knowledge of the stage."

"Yes, so I have been told. However, that does not cause me the least uneasiness. I expect, when once engaged, to be able to perfect my acting. Allow me to continue. '*Oh Mathilde, idole*' "

"I am sorry to interrupt you, but it is impossible for me to judge in this manner. I must see you play a whole scene before I can tell what you can do. Try to find some one to give you the cue, and I shall then have much pleasure in going to hear you."

"Oh dear! is there so much difficulty about it? I thought you would engage me directly; if that is the case I must wait . . I shall see . . it is surprising all the same when one can sing the high *si*! Listen, sir, *si, si*; I have the honour to wish you good morning. '*Oh Mathilde, idole de mon âme !*'"

As soon as this original is bowed out, in steps another, who may be recognized at once as a provincial actor. His braided frock coat, ornamented with large *lappels*, forms a curious contrast with his *once white* summer trowsers, and an old brown beaver hat, so small as only to admit of being perched on the top of his head.

"Good morning, Sir."

"Good morning, my boy."

"Have you heard of any thing that can suit me?

"No, my dear fellow, no. If you could sing, with the knowledge of the stage that you possess, I could have placed you over and over again."

"What can I do! Every one to his style. To think that I played the first parts in Strasbourg! *(sighing.)* Ah! I enjoyed myself very much in that town!"

"I have told you before that comedy does not take at all now. There is hardly anything doing but in Opera, either *seria* or *buffa*. Singers, singers, nothing but singers! that is the cry of the managers. The public will not listen to any thing else; it is all the rage. But it can't last for ever; they will get tired of music, and return to dramas and comedies. Then I can do something for you."

"I shall be very much obliged to you. I shall never forget that at Strasbourg."

"How is your little boy?"

"He is as well as possible. Bye the bye, do you know that my wife is just confined with her second? Children are sure to arrive when one has enough to do to provide for oneself. My wife was certainly an immense favorite at Strasbourg! And now we are both thrown out! Upon my word it is too provoking! Pray try to get us something to do: I do not ask a thousand crowns a month; in fact if we had only a little to keep us going, I should not mind. I

have certainly a right to be more particular. When one has played the first parts at Strasbourg!"

"I must know perfectly well that you played the first parts at Strasbourg, since your engagement was made by me. But make yourself easy; I will look out for something, you may be sure."

"Good bye, then. I shall depend upon hearing from you."

The provincial actor may be heard murmuring as he descends the stairs, "To think that I played the first parts in Strasbourg! What a rascally set those managers are!" On leaving the Agent's, he proceeds to meet some companions in misfortune in the gardens of the Palais Royal, the favourite rendezvous of unengaged actors. It is there that they console themselves for their misfortune, by railing against the managers and the public. But it is worthy of remark that they never enter the adjacent coffee-houses: they are content with the cooling shade of the trees. Even the Pont des Arts, which from its name, ought properly to be open to them, is, on account of the toll, almost forbidden ground. Happily hope never deserts them. Cheered by her benign influence, the needy group dream of brilliant engagements, showers of laurels, and glorious immortality.

But to return to the Agent. It is not so easy to ascertain and record what takes place in his office, when he is there closeted with an actress seeking an engagement. We do not like to be positive on the subject; but we are not quite satisfied that the two and a half per cent. on the amount of the salary is in all cases the only commission he expects from her. He frequents the theatres with great assiduity, and never misses a first representation. The stage door opens to him, as well as the public entrance. He may be seen in the orchestra, talking familiarly to the journalists; and behind the scenes, with his back against the wings, taking snuff without ceremony with the actors, and gossiping with them all, from the most obscure to the highest. And this is not surprising; for those who are to-day the idols of the public, have been once poor and unknown, and at that time his clients. He it is who has pushed them forward and enabled them to win their spurs. Nobody has better materials to publish curious memoirs. He knows all the *bons mots* of the favorite actors, and current scandal of all the theatres. He could tell at any time the number of lovers of Mademoiselle A., and the exact amount of the debts of Mademoiselle B.

There is no chronicler more favorably placed for collecting all the gossip and anecdotes of the green-room, and in general the thousand nothings so eagerly sought after by the Parisian public. Several celebrated actors do not disdain to consult him on the manner of ending a soliloquy, and upon the effects to be produced on the stage. Sometimes he is, or has been an actor of more or less talent. We have now a favourite actor at one of the minor theatres who is at the same time rather a noted Theatrical Agent.

The Agent is usually remarkable for his good nature, and well deserves the

name of the artists' friend. He has always at their service some kind and consoling words, and, what is more substantial, some five-franc pieces to *lend* them in urgent cases, He ought, therefore, to meet with gratitude; but this is not always the case. Some comedians (melancholy victims of the *injustice* of the public) are very inveterate against the poor Agent, and lay all their misfortunes at his door. Ye Gods! how they do treat him! To hear them, you would suppose that no jew, no usurer, was ever half so rapacious. The failure of a man of talent, the success of a bad actor, is all laid to his account!

The Agent resembles the Actor in his choice of apartments. He generally lodges on the third or fourth floor above the *entresol*. The number of his rooms varies of course according to the number of his family, but the two best rooms are always devoted to his profession: the largest is the waiting room, the other is the office. This last is furnished like a petty attorney's office, except that there is certain to be, instead of a learned judge's portrait, a sketch, in pen or pencil, of some dramatic scene, and a likeness of some celebrated actor, "*presented to his friend* * * *, Theatrical Agent, as a token of esteem." Frequently he employs a clerk, at sixty pounds a year, who does the writing, and represents him in his absence.

Towards Easter, when the theatrical year is near its close, and engagements for the ensuing one have to be completed, the waiting room of the Agent presents a curious appearance. It is so crowded that there is scarcely a seat to be had. The faces of the male part of the company are shaved with the greatest care. There is not the slightest vestige of beard, whiskers, or moustachios. This is one of the conditions of the profession, and the disciples of Thalia and Melpomene must deposit their beards as an offering on the shrines of their respective deities. Indian ink and sepia afford them, in case of necessity, an easy substitute.

Any common observer, with a little tact, would easily assign to each actor, from his outward appearance, the line of characters he is accustomed to play. The lover is distinguishable by his dress coat, his straw-coloured gloves, and Adonis-like curls. The leading tragedian paces to and fro, *draped* majestically in his cloak. The comic actor, carrying his drollery off the stage, is continually provoking all within hearing to laughter by his humourous sallies. The tenor may be known by his rotundity, and by the number of rings ornamenting his fat fingers. The prima donna hums an air more or less in tune. The continual noise and buzzing heard in this room might remind one of the Confusion of Tongues. The walls of the apartment are covered with bills and advertisements of all sorts, in the clerk's hand-writing. On one side you read,—"An excellent *table-d'hôte* at eleven pence, consisting of soup, three dishes at choice, dessert, half a pint of wine, and bread at discretion." A little farther,—"Superfine rouge to be sold, at the office." On the other side,—"The handsome wardrobe of a first-rate actor to be disposed of. Facilities will be given for the payment, &c. &c."

On the Agent entering the room all conversation ceases. They crowd towards him, until he is completely surrounded. He shakes hands right and left; for one he has a compliment on the success he has just obtained; for another, a word of consolation for his ill luck.

"Well, Casimir," says he, addressing himself to a man who takes the first parts, "I hope you are pleased with your brilliant success at Lyons?"

"Yes, yes," replies Casimir, drawing himself up, "it was not too bad. But this season they will not have me for less than two hundred and forty pounds, besides a benefit. These are my terms."

"And you, my poor Saulieu, you did not meet, then, with much encouragement at Rouen?"

"Oh! do not mention it. I made my *début* in the same piece as my wife. She made an immense hit, and I was hissed down from the first scene to the last. Every time I opened my mouth, there was noise enough to bring down the theatre. Everybody is taken in, in that rascally town!.....Adolphe,—(you know that first-rate *fork*—the fellow who is always hungry)—came out the next day in a capital part. But *that* was another failure, and yet he is a clever actor. What vexed me the most, was to leave my wife there; for, of course, I was obliged to seek another engagement."

We must leave this dealer in human flesh in the midst of his merchandize, good or bad, sound or damaged, and finish in a few words what remains for us to say.

The end of the Agent offers nothing remarkable. He retires like any other merchant, when he has gained a sufficient income. Only by one of those singularities so common to our nature, it is observed that after having made his fortune by trafficking with his fellow-creatures, like so much cattle, he becomes in his old age a philanthropist, and excessively punctilious in all that relates to the dignity of man. We know at the present time a late Theatrical Agent, who is one of the most zealous opponents of the slave trade.

Captain Pidding thinks it right to inform the public that his Chinese correspondent states confidently, that there is no probability of the trade opening with that country, for, at the least, twelve months; and as the entire stock of consumable tea in Great Britain will be exhausted before that period, there is little doubt but tea will advance duty.—January, 1810.

The Tea consist of

CAPTAIN PIDDING'S

HOWQUA'S MIXTURE

TEAS

SMALL LEAF GUNPOWDER

THE SOLE AGENTS IN LONDON ARE

C. VERREY, Swan Confectioner, 216, Regent Street,

AND

T. LITTLEJOHN & SON, Confectioners, [illegible]

KEW, Tea [illegible]

CAPTAIN PIDDING'S TEAS

The accounts lately received from Macao, bringing intelligence of the English having been totally expelled from China, and hostilities having actually commenced between Her Majesty's forces, directed by Her Superintendent in person, and Chinese men of war; in other words, China being at war with England on questions of such difficult adjustment as to render it almost impossible, and certainly improbable, that any more tea can arrive from that country for a considerable period, a great rise in all descriptions of that article has taken place. Since June last, common black teas have risen 1s. 9d., and fine green 3s., per lb. Fine Hyson, with duty, fetched at the late public Sales, 9s. 7d. per lb; fine black teas as high as 6s. 7d., whilst up to this moment, Captain Pidding has continued to allow his teas to be sold without any advance whatever. The late great rise, however, having caused a run upon his teas by the trade, who found that they could purchase them cheaper retail, than they could buy inferior teas wholesale, he is compelled to raise the price to prevent his remaining stock being purchased by tea dealers. For the present, CAPTAIN PIDDING'S HOWQUA'S MIXTURE will be sold at the rate of 6s. 9d. per lb., being 9s. the catty, or an advance of only 9d. per lb., when the commonest teas, since June, have advanced 1s. 9d. per lb. HOWQUA'S SMALL LEAF GUNPOWDER will be sold for the present, at 9s. 9d. per lb., when even Hyson, an inferior tea, is fetching, wholesale, 9s. 7d. per lb.; Half and Quarter catties in like proportion.

Captain Pidding thinks it right to inform the public that his Chinese correspondent states confidently, that there is no probability of the trade opening with that country, for, at the least, twelve months; and as the entire stock of consumable tea in Great Britain will be exhausted before that period, there is little doubt but tea will advance daily.—January, 1840.

These Teas consist of

CAPTAIN PIDDING'S

HOWQUA'S MIXTURE
OF YOUNG HYSON, BLACK TEAS, AND HOWQUA'S
SMALL LEAF GUNPOWDER
IN CHINESE CATTY PACKAGES

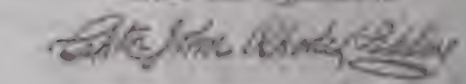
THE SOLE AGENTS IN LONDON ARE

C. VERREY, Swiss Confectioner, 218, REGENT STREET;

AND

T. LITTLEJOHN & SON, Confectioners, 77, KING WILLIAM ST., CITY.

N.B. The signature of



is upon every genuine Package.

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